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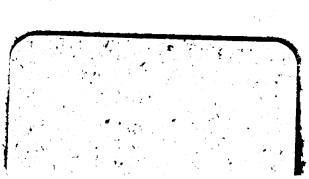

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175
I. Baptism.

THE MODE AND SUBJECTS OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM;

CONSIDERED

IN

TWO DISCOURSES;

Delivered in the Presbyterian Church,

Cazenovia,

Lord's days the 9th & 16th March, 1817:

With some additions and alterations.

By JOHN BROWN, A. M.
Minister of the Presbyterian Congregation in Cazenovia.

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The design of the author in the following discourses has been, to advance truth in a manner plain and intelligible to an illiterate reader.

If he have succeeded in this object, he will be indifferent to any criticisms that may be offered on particulars of minor importance.

These discourses have no special claim to originality— On topics which have employed the tongue and pen of controversy for more than two hundred years, nothing materially new can be expected, and the author is happy in the reflection that for the defence of the positions which he has here endeavored to maintain, nothing new is needful.

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DISCOURSE, &c.

HAPPY were those days when the professed followers of Christ were of one heart and of one soul; when the church, though divided into several branches, and existing in various places, was nevertheless one. Then a common interest animated the whole body. Of the members the world took knowledge, that they loved one another, that they had been with Christ, and that they truly belonged to a kingdom not of this world.

These days, pleasant as they really were, are now gone, and, in their stead have succeeded days of division and strife, in which the "seamless garment" of our Savior has been rent in various parts, and the members of his mystical body set in an hostile array against each other.

The evils resulting from this state of things are almost immense. "It supplies infidels with their most plausible topics of invective; it hardens the consciences of the irreligious—weakens the hands of the good, impedes the efficacy of prayer, and is probably a principal obstruction to that ample effusion of the spirit which is essential to the renovation of the world."

These evils every sincere christian deeply deplores, and for support under them looks forward with gladness to that predicted and long desired day when the watchmen, placed on the walls of Zion shall lift up their voices together and see eye to eye.

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Among the controversies that have aided in bringing the visible church into a state so deplorable, that respecting the mode and subjects of Christian Baptism has had no inconsiderable share. Though later than most others in its origin, it has been behind but few in the danger or extent of its influence. While other controversies have respected the great and fundamental truths of religion, and, as a consequence, have seperated only those differing upon these points; this has had for its immediate object an outward ordinance, and as a consequence, has seperated into dissociate bodies, persons thinking and feeling alike upon almost every thing else appertaining to Christianity.

Unhappily for the cause of religion in this place, this controversy exists here, and with some excites an undue share of attention and concern. In instances it is to be feared, it has prevented a proper regard to what is infinitely more important. While it has excited an enquiry about *Water*, it has prevented, or extinguished, in more cases than one, all proper enquiry respecting sin, righteousness and a judgment to come.

In no discourse hitherto, either from this place, or in any part of the society, have I dwelt upon this controversy. While the theory and practice which I have adopted, have been strenuously opposed, I have been silent, administering the ordinance of baptism in that way which appears to me the most scriptural, without in the least bringing to view the sentuments or the practice of others—not however through indifference, but from the hope and confidence that the people of my charge generally, were too well grounded in the truth to be shaken by any assaults that were, or might be made, and also from the wish that their attention might be called to subjects which, certainly in respect to most of them, are of far greater present importance.

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It has at length appeared to be my duty in a public manner to attend to this subject. And this, agreeably to notice given the last sabbath, will be my object in the discourses now to be delivered.

As persons adhering to different sentiments in this controversy from myself, have been repeatedly heard, I now claim as my privilege your candid and serious attention, to what I may advance 1st upon the mode, 2ndly, upon the subjects of Christian Baptism.

One point of difference between us, and our brethren of the Baptist denomination, respects the mode of Baptism, they maintaining in opposition to ourselves that an immersion, or an intire plunging of the body in water in the act of baptism is essential to the validity of the ordinance and that those not thus immersed or plunged are unbaptised persons, and are without the pale of the visible church; while we on the other hand, not placing the validity of the ordinance in the mode of the application of water, suppose that a person is baptized agreeably to the purport of the institution, when the appointed element has been applied to him by authorized hands in the name of the Trinity.

In speaking on the mode of baptism, the particular passage to which I would call your attention may be found Acts 9, 18. *And he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized.*

The person here mentioned as arising and being baptised was Saul, afterwards St. Paul, the great Apostle of the Gentiles. Having been three days without sight and refreshment at the house of one Judas in Damascus, he was visited by Ananias, who appears to have been the christian minister of the place, by the laying on of whose hands he immediately received his sight and was filled with the Holy Ghost.

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And immediately, saith the inspired penman, *there fell from his eyes as it had been scales, and he received sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized.*

It appears from what Paul related before his persecuters at Jerusalem, that Ananias commanded him to arise and to be baptized, and wash away his sins calling upon the name of the Lord. This is all that the scriptures relate respecting this case of baptism.

Here the question arises—In what manner was water in this instance applied? That it was applied in the name of the Trinity, there can be no doubt, because Christ had expressly appointed that it should be so applied in this christian rite. But was Paul immersed in water, or was water applied to him by affusion or sprinkling? If it be said he was immersed—I ask where? In the house, or was he conducted weak as he must have been, through three days trouble and abstinence from refreshment, to some river or stream of water without? None will pretend that it was done in the house, because conveniencies for immersion cannot with any reason be supposed to have existed there.—Was it then without? Very unlikely indeed. When Ananias addressed him in respect to Baptism, he commanded him to arise—not to go out or to follow him out. Having arisen, the ordinance was administered to him, standing no doubt in an erect posture. Thus as the text declares—he arose and was baptized.

From this, let us pass to each of the other instances of baptism recorded in the new testament, the circumstances of which are in any measure stated.

The apostle, whose baptism we have been considering speaks, 1 Cor. 10, 1. 2. of one administered to the Israelites as they passed through the Red Sea. *Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how*

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that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea. And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud, and in the sea.

If the Apostle, with respect to the mode of Baptism, was himself a Baptist, as our brethren very earnestly contend—if he called none baptized unless they had been immersed, then he meant to be understood that the Israelites were actually plunged in the cloud and in the sea—that their bodies were wholly immersed in them.

With these ideas in our minds, let us repair to the Mosaic account of this event. See Exodus 14. 21.—*And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them, on their right hand and on their left.*

Now let us in the spirit of candor inquire, how these Israelites could be baptized in the mode on which our brethren insist, consistently with the facts here related. They could not have been put into the water, nor under the water, nor taken out of the water. Their feet, if Moses relates the truth, continually stood on dry ground. The most that can be supposed is, that some sprays from the sea, and drops from the cloud that passed between them and the Egyptians, fell upon them.

It is therefore a fact that persons are declared in scripture to have been baptized, not in the likeness of immersion, but to have been baptized as really so in respect to the mode singly, as were the disciples of John, of Christ, or the Apostles, at a time when they were not immersed, but when they were actually standing on dry ground.

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How these facts agree with considering and treating persons as unbaptized simply because they have not been wholly immersed, or plunged in water, is submitted to the candour of our brethren to decide.

Another instance of Baptism recorded in the New-Testament is, that of our Saviour, by John his forerunner; the circumstances of which are related by the Evangelists, Matthew and Mark in the following manner. Says St. Matthew—*Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, suffer it to be so now, for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. And Jesus when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water.** The Evangelist Mark relates that John Baptized him in Jordan.†—Luke simply states the fact.‡ John makes no mention of it.

Our brethren suppose that they have here a certain instance of immersion, and this supposition in the use which they have made of it, has had more influence in leading persons of a certain description to adopt their theory and practice, than all other considerations united.

Though the baptism, administered by John, was not the baptism which Christ instituted after his resurrection, as our more judicious and enlightened brethren freely acknowledge, yet in determining the mode of baptism, we may properly attend to it.

Confident as our brethren are that Christ was baptized by immersion, and as essential as this is to their own scheme, several important circumstances nevertheless concur in supporting an opposite opinion.

*Matthew 3, 13 16. †Mark 1, 9. ‡Luke 3, 21

B.

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1. John was not commissioned to baptize *in* water, but *with* water. *He that sent me to baptize* with *water, the same said to me, upon whom thou shall see the spirit descending and remaining on him, the same is he that baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.* In fulfilment of this commission, John says in another place, *I baptize* with *water.*

As John was the harbinger of Christ, the baptism which he administered with water, was doubtless emblematical of the one which Christ was to administer with the Holy Ghost. As Christ, in administering his baptism, poured out his spirit upon men, or made an application of it to them, rather than an application of them to the spirit, or an immersion of them in it, so John, in administering his baptism, must have applied water to its subjects, in a manner analogous to that in which the spirit is applied in spiritual baptism.—Accordingly we hear him saying to those who came to him for baptism, *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to wear, he shall baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire.**

To immerse a body *in* water is an entirely different act from baptizing it *with* water. In immersing a body in water, the administrator applies the body to the water, but in baptizing a body *with* water, he takes water and applies it to the body.

Had John baptized, as our brethren very confidently believe, by immersion, he would not have said *I baptize with water*, but he must have said I baptize *in* water; for to talk of dipping and plunging with water, is manifestly absurd. We may plunge, or dive, or sink

* Matthew 3, 11. Mark 1, 3 Luke 3, 16. John 1,26 33.

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in water, but we cannot plunge, or dive, or sink *with* it, so that our brithren in maintaining that this *ancient baptist*, as they are pleased to term him, baptized by immersion, only maintain what is inconsistent with what he said respecting his own baptism, and his commission to administer it.

2. There is no more difficulty in conceiving of John's baptizing Christ with water in Jordan, than there is in conceiving one person's baptizing another with water in this house. It is as easy to apply water to a person standing on the banks of a river, or in the brim of it, or waist deep in it, as in this house, or in any other place.

Besides, the phrase "in Jordan" does not of necessity imply an entrance into its waters. God commanded Joshua to direct the priests that bore the ark of the covenant, (Joshua 3, 8.) *When they had come to the brink of the water of Jordan, to stand still in Jordan.*— It is manifest from this passage, that a person agreeably to the language of the scripture, may be said to be in a river when he only stands by the side of its waters. It is also manifest from this passage, that a river and the waters of a river are, according to the language of scripture, distinct things, and that to be in the *former*, it is not necessary to be in the *latter*. The same phraseology obtains in scripture in respect to the sea. A sea, and the waters in it, or filling it, are generally spoken of as being distinct. Consequently the Israelites are said to have passed through the Red Sea, and the river Jordan, though the soals of their feet touched the waters of neither.†

3. The Greek particles, translated in the passages quoted, *in* and *out of*, may with equal propriety, and, as

† Exodus 14, 22. Josh. 3, 16. 17. Isa. 8, 7 & 11, 9. Hebrews 2, 14.

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some pious and very learned men have supposed, with greater propriety, be rendered *at* and *from*. The translation being thus altered, the passages would read in this manner. *And Jesus was baptized of John at Jordan, and straightway coming up* from *the water he saw the heavens opened &c.* The passages thus rendered, would be very remote from suggesting that our Savior was baptized by immersion.

But though these particles, in our version of the New Testament, are far more frequently translated *at* and *from*, than *in* and *out of*, yet I am willing that the passages should stand as they now read; it being their sound rather than their true meaning which appears to favor the theory and practice of our brethren.

If the baptists will rigidly insist that the phrase "in Jordan" renders it certain that the body of Christ, in the reception of baptism, was wholly immersed in the waters of that river, I have only to request that they will act consistently with this in relation to some other passages appertaining to the baptism of John, where the same word here translated *in*, occurs. See Mark 1, 4. *John did baptize* in *the wilderness.* Fully to carry through their mode of reasoning, our brethren must here say, that John plunged, or immersed his subjects *in* the wilderness. But no, say they, "John preached in the wilderness but he baptized in the river Jordan."‡ Contrary as this 'shift' is to the plain declaration in the passage before us, we will admit it. The place then *in* the wilderness where John baptized, or immersed his subjects, was the river Jordan. Well, be it so—I will only insist on another passage being understood in agreement with this conclusion. See John 10, 39 40. *But he, i c.* Christ *escaped out of their hands, and went away again beyond Jordan, into the place where John at first baptized and there he abode; and many resorted unto him.*

‡ Baldwin on the mode of Baptism, p. 82.

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The place where John first baptized, was in the wilderness, as is very evident from the above passage in Mark.

But the place say our brethren, where John baptized, while he preached in the wilderness, was the river Jordan. Into this river therefore, the saviour of sinners, in his flight from their rage, plunged himself, and there, immersed in its waters, he abode, and many resorted unto him!! Such inconsistencies are in no way avoidable, if the mode of reasoning, adopted by our brethren, be pursued and be allowed to be correct. Baptizing in the wilderness is baptizing in the river Jordan, and baptizing in this river, is baptizing in a place beyond it!!!

But it will here be inquired, why John baptized at Jordan and Enon, if he did not perform the rite by plunging or immersion?

In reply to this inquiry I would observe, that none can reaonably suppose that the quantities of water in either of these places, were necessary for the administration of baptism in any mode. More than John did or could baptize, might in the same time, be immersed in a stream containing no more than a hundredth part of the water which modern travellers represent as running between the banks of Jordan. The argument, drawn from the quantities of water which were, or are supposed to have been in these places, if it prove any thing, proves by far too much, altogether more than its friends wish. If it were solely, or principally on account of the mode in which John baptized that he fixed upon such baptismal stations, it would be natural to infer that he baptized in some mode, requring vastly more water than is now found necessary for immersion. Very shallow streams answer the purpose of our brethren. They do not seem to need a Jordan,

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nor the *much* nor the *many waters* of an Enon, to administer baptism to very respectable numbers. Indeed small streams appear to answer their purpose better than large ones.

While John baptized at these places, places so fertile with arguments favoring the exclusiveness of immersion, the disciples of Christ, itinerating from place to place in a region where neither much nor many waters can with ease be found, baptized far more even so many more, that one of his disciples, apprehensive that his masters popularity was drawing to a close, came to him and said—"Rabbi," *he that was with thee beyond Jordan to whom thou bearest witness, behold the same baptizeth, and all men come to him.**

If more persons than John baptised at Enon and Jordan *were* baptized by the disciples of Christ, traveling from place to place, it is difficult to see what direct evidence those baptismal stations furnish, that either John or others immersed those who came to them for baptism.

It is indeed said that John baptized at Enon because there was much or many waters there. Though this collection of water, or waters could not have been necessary for the administration of baptism in any mode, yet in that warm climate, it might have been for the refreshment of the persons and beasts of those who came to attend upon the ministry of John, tarrying as they doubtless often did, many days and nights.

It is said of John that he wrought no miracles. No miracles were performed either in the numbers he baptized, or in the preservation of his life and health under the labor of baptizing them; yet some of our brethren suppose, that in a period, not exceeding eigh

*John 3, 26 & 4, 2.

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teen months, he baptized by immersion not less than a million of persons. To have baptized in this period; and a longer period he certainly had not in which to do it; one half, or one third of this number by immersion, he must have stood from morning till evening, day after day, week after week, and month after month, in all seasons of the year, up to his waist himself in water, plunging persons into it, and taking them out of it continually. To have done this for a single month or week, and yet to have remained in life and health, would have been a miracle as astonishing as almost any recorded in the New Testament.

Another instance of Baptism recorded in the New Testament which, in the view of our brethren, decides much in their favor, is that of the Eunuch, a minister of great authority under Candace Queen of the Ethiopians, who, returning from Jerusalem whither he had been to worship, was met by Philip, as he was reading the scriptures in his chariot. After a profession of his faith, Philip baptized him. But in what mode? We are not informed. The action of baptizing is not brot to view. The sacred penman relates, *That as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water, and the Eunuch said, see here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized. And Philip said if thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him, and when they had come up out of the water, the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip.**

Now I ask what there is in this narrative, containing direct evidence, that the Eunuch was baptized by immersion?

*Acts 8, 36, 39.

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Is it their arriving at a water? Certainly not. For they arrived at this place before the Eunuch spoke of being baptized, or made any profession of his faith.— When they arrived here, they were not in search of water, but were pursuing the course which the Eunuch was in when the Apostle met him.

Does the water or any of the circumstances of it prove an immersion? Certainly not. Whether it was a spring, a brook, a river, a pond or lake, we are not told, neither can any mortal decide.

If it were a river, as our brethren suppose, it would be no proof in itself that the Eunuch was immersed, unless it be impossible to administer baptism at a river in any other mode than immersion.

Does the circumstance of their going down *into* the water prove immersion? Certainly not. This was an intirely distinct thing from the act of baptism. The baptizer went down *into* the water equally with the person to be baptized.

Does their coming up *out of* the water prove an immersion? No, Philip came up *out of the* water, as really as did the Eunuch. If one to come up out of the water must have first been plunged, or immersed in it, so must the other also.

The act of baptism was a distinct thing from their going down into the water, and also from their coming up out of it. The act of baptism was after the one, and before the other, and neither was any more a part of it than their alighting from the chariot, or their going from the chariot to the water side. What this act was is left wholly undetermined by all these circumstances.

But while these circumstances do not determine

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that this act was an immersion, there were other circumstances that strongly imply that it was not.

Philip like John was doubtless commissioned to baptize *with* water, and, as a consequence, he doubtless applied water to the subject rather than the subject to the water.

At the head of the particular connection of scripture which the Eunuch was perusing when met by the Apostle, stands the memorable passage; *so shall He sprinkle many nations*,* from which, as explained by the Apostle, it is not improbable, that the former obtained those ideas of baptism which he possessed when he made application for it.

The Eunuch was doubtless apparell'd in a manner becoming his station, and consequently not suitably attired for a decent immersion. No intimation however is given of his changing his raiment, or of his doing any thing else preparatory to the baptism, than alighting from the carriage and going down to the water.

The original words here rendered *into* and *out of*, might, as they are translated in many other passages, have been rendered *to* and *from*. The particle here rendered *into* is in this very chapter six times translated *to* and *unto*, and is rendered *into* but once, a circumstance this not a little remarkable, and in no small degree deserving the attention of the exclusive advocates for immersion.

The latter particle here translated *out of*, is rendered *from* one hundred and two times in the five first books of the New Testament, and *out of* but seventy-seven times. Another circumstance which these same persons should seriously consider.

*Isaiah 52, 15.

C.

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Did the passage read thus, *And they went down both to the water, both Philip and the Eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they had come up from the water, the spirit of the Lord caught away Philip*, no one would ever have dreamed that the Eunuch was immersed. To infer the mode of baptism from the signification of the words *into* and *out of*, as here rendered by our translators, especially with such confidence as do our brethren, can neither be considered as discreet nor candid.

But the words, here translated *into* and *out of* not only *may*, but as is believed, actually *should* be translated *to* and *from*.

Where the entrance of a body *into* a place, or the passage of a body *out of* a place, is certainly intended to be expressed in the original of the New Testament, two particles or prepositions that may signify *to* or *from* are uniformly, or very generally employed, one in immediate connection with the word denoting the place, the other in the composition of the word expressing the action. And on the other hand, when the passage of a body *to* a place, or the passage of a body *from* a place is only intended, but one particle signifying to or from is used. Of these facts, it is apprehended, there will not be a remaining doubt in the mind of any one who will candidly attend to a few of the many places in the New Testament where they clearly occur.

In John 20, 3, 4, 5. we are informed that a certain disciple, outrunning Peter, came first *to* the sepulchre of our Lord, but that he did not go in. This action is expressed in the original in the following words, *Kai elthe prootos eis to mneemeion*, "and came first to the sepulchre." Here the preposition *eis* is but once used and that in immediate connection with the word denoting the place. In the 6th verse we are informed that

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Peter actually went into the sepulchre. This action in the original is expressed in the following words, *eiseelthen eis to mneemeion*, "went into the sepulchre."—Here the preposition *eis* is twice used, once in immediate connection with the word denoting the sepulchre and once in the composition of the word denoting the action. Says the Saviour, John 3. 5, "Unless a man be born *of* water and the spirit, *he cannot enter the kingdom of God;*" *gr*, *oudunatai eiselthein eis teen basileian tou Theou.* Here the preposition is again twice used, once in connection with the word denoting the place entered, and once in the composition of the word denoting the action of entering it.

In Matthew 17, 27, Christ directed Peter to go *to* the sea and to cast an hook, &c. The action of simply going *to* the sea is thus expressed in the original, *poreutheis eis teen thalassan.* Here the preposition *eis* is but once used, and that in immediate connection with the word denoting the place to which Peter was to go. In Matthew 27. 53, we are informed that many bodies of the saints that slept "came *out of* their graves." This action is thus expressed in the original, *exeelthontes ek toon mneemeioon* Here two prepositions are employed literally meaning *from*, the one in immediate connection with the word denoting the place out of which the bodies arose, the other in the composition of the word denoting the action of coming out. In Revelation 3. 10 we are informed of the falling of a star from Heaven. The action of falling *from*, is thus expressed in the original, *epesen ek tou ouranou asteer megas.* Here the preposition *ek* "*from*" is but once used, and that with immediate connection with the word denoting the place from which it fell.

I will here refer the reader to several passages of scripture in support of the particulars mentioned.

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1. Where the passages of a body *into* a place appears to be certainly intended, Matthew 10. 5, & 21. 12, Mark 11, 15, and 16. 5, Luke 4. 38: 19, 45 and 22. 10, Acts 3. 3, 13, 14, 14, 1, 20 : 16, 15 and 21, 20 28, Heb. 9. 24, 25. James 2. 2. Mark 16. 19. In each of these passages two prepositions will be found, one in the composition of the verb, and the other in connection with the word denoting the place *into* which entrance is made.

2. Where the passages of a body *out of* a place appears to be certainly intended. Matthew 21. 17 and 27, 53. Mark 1. 29 and 11, 19. Luke 4. 29, 35 and 9. 5. John 4, 30: 16, 27 and 17, 8. Acts 7. 58: 14 19 and 16 13. Rom. 1, 18. 2 Thes. 1. 7. Heb. 3 16. Rev. 14, 15: 15, 6 and 19, 5. In each o fthese passages two prepositions signifiying *from* will be found connected as are the prepositions in the former case.

3. Where the passages of a body *to* a place appears only to be intended, Mark 11, 15 and 16 2. Luke 4 16. Acts 3, 1, taken in connection with the 3d verse. In these passages but one preposition will be found, and that in connection with the word denoting the place &c.

4. Where the passages of a body from a place appears to be *only* intended, Matthew 4, 25: 16, 1 and 21 25. Mark 11 30. Luke 10, 54: 18, 29: 20, 4. John 1, 32 and 6, 31. Acts 2, 2 : 9, 3 and 11, 5, 9. 1 Thes. 1, 10. Rev. 9, 9. In these passages but one preposition signifying *from* will be found connected as is the same part of speech in the immediately preceeding case.

This two fold use of the same preposition in one case, and the single use of it in another, cannot be without design, and it is believed that christian candor will decide that the two fold use of the same preposition is designed to express more than what is intended to be

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expressed by the single use of it, that the two fold use of prepositions meaning *to* or *from* is to express what in English is meant by *into* and *out of*, and that the single use of these prepositions is to express what in English is meant by *to* and *from*. Agreeably to this decision the translators of the New Testament, have rendered the most of the passages above cited, and had they conducted agreeably to it in translating the whole and all others like them, it is thought that the true meaning of many texts would be more obvious.

If this decision be correct, then the passage under consideration not only *may*, but actually *should* be differently rendered. Instead of *into* the water, and *out of* the water, it should be *to the water* and *from the water*. The preposition *eis* can no more mean *into*, in this passage, than it so means in John 20. 5, where it is translated to. Nor can the preposition *ek*, here mean *out of*, any more than it has this meaning in Rev. 8. 10, where it is necessarily translated *from*.

And if this decision be correct, then that passage Matt. 3, 16 translated *And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway* out of *the water*, not only may, but actually *should* be rendered, *and Jesus* when he was baptized, went up straightway *from the water*. The preposition *apo*, signifying from, is here but once used and there is no other particle in the sentence to extend its meaning, and, consequently there is no more reason to believe that Christ, after receiving baptism went up out of the water, than there is to believe that he came out of the mountain, when he descended from it after having preached to his disciples upon it. Matt 5, 1 and 8. 1.

According to the translation of Matt. 5. 1, Christ actually went *up into a* mountain, but the circumstances render it evident that he only ascended to the top of it.

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Let us suppose a person to embrace the sentiment that no preaching can be valid, which is not delivered from *beneath* the surface of a mountain. In proof of the correctness of his opinion, he alledges that Christ went up *into* a mountain before he delivered the memorable sermon recorded in the 5th, 6th and 7th of Matthew. An opponent, however, informs him, that the original particle here translated *into* might have been rendered *to*, and, in proof of his assertion, adds that it is frequently thus rendered in our translation of the New Testament. To such an objection might he not reply as Baptists, in another case, do to us, and with as much propriety too; "If the phrase, *into the mountain*, mean only *to* the mountain, or *at* the mountain, or *about* the mountain, no person will ever get *into* heaven or hell, he will only get *near* it, or *to* it, or *about* it." Nay, might he not bring forward the case of the swine too, and indeed reiterate the whole harangue which is so frequently rehearsed at the water side, as a preface to the solemn ordinance of Baptism!!!

But admitting that they went down into the water, and that Philip baptized the Eunuch by plunging, or immersing him, still it is impossible for me to conceive that it was any thing more than a partial plunging.—No more of the Eunuch's body was put into the water, in the act of baptism, than was actually out of water, when that act commenced. As much as was under before, was not put under, in the administration of Baptism.

According to the sentiments of our brethren, it is the duty of the officiating minister, in the administration of baptism, to put, by an act of his own, the body of the subject wholly in water. If the subject be one quarter, one third, or one half immersed in water when he commences the ceremony, only the part actually out, can be immersed in the act of baptism; and, con-

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sequently he cannot be said wholly to immerse it. As much as was under water before the rite of baptism commenced, the subject put under himself, and it was not done in the name of the Trinity, nor as any part of baptism. Suppose a Baptist Minister were to meet, in sailing some river, a penitent swimmer with only his *head* out of water, could he be said to immerse, or wholly to plunge the person in water, by simply putting his head under its surface? None will pretend it. The body in such a case would indeed be wholly *in*, or *under* water, but it would not become so by any act of his. The head would be the *only* part which he could be said to have immersed.

Every person of candor and discernment cannot but perceive that such a case would not essentially differ from that of the Eunuch, provided he were baptized as our brethren suppose, nor from any cases of baptism that occur *in* streams of water. In all such cases, the administrator finds the subject to a greater or less extent in the water, and the only portion of him which he puts *in*, is that which he finds *out* when he commences the act of baptism.

Between the sentiments and the practice of our brethren on the article of baptism, there is certainly a clashing. If their sentiments are scriptural, it is impossible to conceive how they are baptized persons.—No matter how frequently they have been wholly under water in the course of their lives, none baptized after the supposed example of the Eunuch, have been wholly put in or under water in the act of christian baptism. Finding a body in water, is a very different translation from putting one in. Finding a body partly buried in the earth and completing the burial, are different transactions from putting a body into the earth and wholly burying it. The dead are not only buried in their graves but are put into them. They never go

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in themselves, or partially bury themselves. Survivors both put them in and bury them there. And all this must be done really to bury a body in a "*watery grave.*"

We have now considered the only instances of baptism represented in the New Testament as having been administered at or in any natural stream or fountain of water. On these our brethren mainly depend for a defence of the exclusiveness of their mode; with what degree of propriety all are left to judge.

Let us now pass to notice the remaining instances. The first is that of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost. These all heard the Gospel, believed, and received baptism in the same day. Peter could not have finished his preaching and lengthy exhortations, and they their professions of faith, before the middle of the day was past. Not more than five or six hours remained for the administration of baptism. If the twelve were employed in baptizing, then each had, in the course of five or six hours, two hundred and fifty persons to baptize, about forty five an hour. If the twelve were united with the seventy, as some unscripturally and very unreasonably suppose, then each had a less number. If as our brethren suppose, they baptized by immersion, there were twelve, or eighty two places found and occupied in which human bodies could be dipped or plunged in water.

Where were these twelve or 82 places found?—Say our brethren at the temple. But it is highly improbable indeed that the Apostles, or any professed believers, had access to the temple, or the privilege of using any of its utensils. And had they, no conveniences for immersion would have been found. No one, carefully examining the sacred furniture either of the first or second temple, will find any conveniences for immersion. See Cal. Frag. Nos. 252 & 3.

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The one "place"* where the Apostles and disciples were generally collected, was not the temple, but some house in the city. This place was the centre of all the solemnities of that day.

Where eighty two, or twelve places in the city of Jerusalem, crowded as it then was with inhabitants and strangers, were found, suitable for immersion, and affording conveniences for the changing of apparel, the scriptures have not informed us. Neither can our brethren do it.

The multitudes, suddenly called together, and with no more expectation of receiving baptism than they had of receiving Christ, must have been unprovided with suitable garments in which to be immersed.

Indeed difficulties, greater than can be easily surmounted, attend the supposition, that they were baptized in any other way than by affusion or sprinkling.

The next instance not yet noticed is that of Cornelius and certain others with him, at Cesarea, a place about seventy five miles N. W. from Jerusalem.† The Apostle preached to him and to them that were with him in *his house.* After they had exhibited evidence of religion, the Apostle inquired, whether any man would forbid water that they should not be baptized. Being baptized, *they prayed him to tarry certain days.*

The whole complexion of the case, favors the idea that these persons were baptized *in* the house. No intimation to the contrary is given, and if there, it is most natural to suppose that they were baptized by affusion.

The baptism next in order is that of Lydia and her household.‡

*Acts 2, 1. † Acts 10. 34, 43. ‡Acts 16.

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No decision can be formed from this case in favor of any mode, much less of immersion. The place of the preaching and doubtless of the baptizing, was by a river side where prayer was wont to be made. Some, however, have supposed that after beleiving, she returned from the place of prayer to her own house. and for the convenience of spectators, that she and her family were baptized at her own door.

The account given by the Apostle seems to support this idea. *When she was baptized*, says he, *and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house*, (not go with me *to my house*, as would have been the phrascology had she been at a distance from the house,) *and abide there.*

There remains one more instance to be noticed, and but one, any of the circumstances of which are mentioned, and that is of the Jailor and all his.

Soon after the baptism of Lydia and her houshold, Paul and Silas were apprehended, beaten with many stripes, and cast into prison. The jailor, having received a charge to keep them safely, thrust them into the *inner prison*, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

At midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises to God. Suddenly upon this there was an earthquake, which opened the prison doors and set all the prisoners free. This alarmed the jailor who sprang into the prison and fell down before Paul and Silas, and said, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved'! And they, having been brought out of the inner prison, said unto him, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shall be saved and thy house." Then they spake unto him the word of the Lord and to all them that were in his house. *And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his*

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straightway. And when he had brought them into his house, he sat meat before them and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

In this narrative, we have a long series of events, that must have taken place in a short time. It was midnight before the first occurred, and the last had transpired probably some considerable time before the dawning of light, for it is added, *And when it was day the magistrates sent the serjeants, saying let those men go.*

In this series, the baptism of the jailor and all his, was the ninth event. Now can it be supposed that after the eight preceeding events had occurred, there was time for this householder to prepare himself and family for a decent immersion, and for the Apostles to baptize them in that mode and to refresh themselves before the dawning of day?

It is not probable that a heathen jailor kept conveniences for immersing, nor that he would, as our brethren suppose, charged as he was with the safe keeping of two prisoners, so far depart from his duty, and run so great a hazard, as to liberate them from prison and depart with them, in the silence and darkness of the night, to some stream or river of water.

This jailor, though he took these prisoners from the dungeon or inner prison, where they were first cast, did not give them their liberty, till a reprieve had arrived from the civil authority. Nor could he have done it consistently with his charge, his duty, or his safety. And this the Apostles themselves knew, and knowing it, they could not have requested him to go with them to some stream or river of water, nor even to pass the limits of the prison with them for any purpose whatever, without tempting him to violate his duty. This the Apostles as honest men and Christians never could do.

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We have now attended to those instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament, the circumstances of which are in any measure mentioned.

And what is the result? We have found that persons are represented as having been baptized at a time when they were standing erect on dry ground. In a large plurality of cases, we have found every circumstance favoring the supposition that sprinkling or affusion was the mode practiced. In no cases, have we found any thing inconsistent with this mode. Not in a single instance have we discovered any thing like changing apparel, or any of the preparations usually made by our brethren for the reception of baptism. Had immersion been the mode universally, or more generally practiced, it is no more than reasonable to suppose that these circumstances, especially the change of raiment, would in some one instance have been mentioned. When Stephen was stoned to death, the circumstance of Saul's taking charge of the garments of his persecutors, is particularly recorded. When Christ washed the feet of his disciples, the circumstances of his laying aside his garments, taking a towel and girding himself and pouring water into a bason, are particularly related.*

Nor in a single instance have we seen persons leave the place of worship, and, in the manner of our brethren, depart to some river or stream of water for the purpose of baptism. Where the word was preached, and the truth professed, there we have found that baptism was administered, whether it was in the wilderness at Jordan, at Enon, in Jerusalem, on the way to Ethiopia, at a private dwelling house, in a prison, or by the river side.

We have seen that the practice of our brethren, in preaching, hearing, professing and communing in one

* Acts 7, 58. John 13, 4, 5.

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place and baptizing in another, is not only without command, but also without precedent in scripture.

We will next notice the sacramental word, used by Christ in the institution of the ordinance of Baptism.

This word in Greek is *Baptizo*, rendered in our translation of the Bible, *Baptize*. Our Baptist brethren earnestly maintain that this word primarily and exclusively means to *dip*, to *plunge*, *wholly to immerse*. They inform us that it is a term *purely Greek*, and that the Greeks, who best understood their own language, used it in this sense. They further inform us, that the *Great Masters* of the Greek language have been agreed in this interpretation, and that a person must forfeit all claim and title to the epithet "learned" to judge differently.

A late writer on baptism, pretty generally translates the term immerse, instead of John the Baptist, or John the Baptizer, he speaks of John the *Immerser*.

If these ideas be correct, the controversy is at an end. If Christ commanded his Apostles to go and *plunge* or *wholly immerse* all nations in the name of the Trinity, the case indeed is an exceedingly plain one. Baptism by affusion or sprinkling is manifestly wrong, and they are verily guilty who practice it.

Let us attend to these extraordinary assertions.

Permit me first, however, to make one or two remarks.

Our brethren are very remarkable for insisting on the correctness of almost *every* particle of our translation of the scriptures, and are ready to scruple the integrity of any one who presumes, in the least, to deviate from it, especially in a way that militates against their peculiar sentiments. While they can hear and read, with pleasure of John the *immerser*, *the dipper*

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and plunger, and of his baptizing *in* water rather than *with* it, yet their ears are amazingly shocked when they hear or read of *John the Baptizer*, of his baptizing *at* Jordan and Enon, and of the Eunuch's going down *to* the water rather than *into* it, and of his and Christ's coming up *from it*, rather than *out of* it. Indeed for their writers and preachers to alter the translation in ever so high a degree, is innocent and commendable, because necessary to a defence of their system, but for one of our writers or preachers to do it, even in a far less degree, not so much to defend our sentiments, as to shew the perfectly sandy foundation of theirs, is an act of presumption, if not of impiety.

They abundantly direct inquirers to the Bible, more especially to the New Testament, and not unfrequently charge us with supporting our sentiments by what is out of the Bible, such as the traditions, and opinions and writings of men.

In attending to the word before us, I intend, agreeably to the very proper direction of our brethren, to go to the *Bible*, and ascertain in what sense the Holy Ghost, the spirit of truth, the tongue and pencil of inspiration hath used it there.

The word *Baptizo* is not more purely *Greek*, than many others in the N. Testament, & why our brethren should be so willing and so anxious to resort to Heathen, idolatrous writers to ascertain the *scriptural* meaning of this word, while, in common with other christians, they are unwilling to pursue this course in respect to these other words, I cannot determine, unless it be absolutely necessary in order to support their scheme.

The word *Theos*, translated in the New Testament, *God*. is as purely a Greek word, as is the term *Baptizo*, and there is the same propriety in resorting to the

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writings andopinions of the Heathen, idolatrous Greeks to ascertain its scriptural meaning, as to ascertain the scriptural meaning of this word. This remark may be extended to many other original words, each of which, as used in the New Testament, has a meaning almost intirely opposite to the one in which it was used in the conversation and writings of the Heathen, idolatrous Greeks.

The sacramental word, expressing the Lord's supper, is *deipnon*, another purely Greek term, whose signification in the conversation, the writings and dictionaries of the Heathen, idolatrous Greeks, was a *feast*, a *feast* in which a great entertainment was made, a feast in which much was eaten and drunken. This is the primary, appropriate signification of this word. But we know that it loses this signification in its application to the holy supper. The Corinthians were severely rebuked, for eating and drinking much in celebrating this ordinance: yet they only conducted agreeably to the Heathenish import of the term expressing it.

Every person of candor and discernment, cannot but see, that, if we were to regulate our views and practice as Christians, *agreeably to the Heathenish import of the purely Greek words used in the original of the New Testament*, we should at once depart from their scriptural meaning, nay we should at once become idolaters and Pagans.

If other purely Greek words lose their primary meaning as used in the New Testament, why may not the term *baptizo*? If it would be dangerous and unchristian to regulate our views and practice agreeably to the primary import of those other words, why may it not be equally dangerous and unchristian to regulate our views and practice according to the primary, or more usual Heathenish meaning of this term?

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Provided our brethren were to prove from the highest classical authority that this term, in Heathen use, meant *to dip, to plunge, to immerse*, it would avail nothing in aid of their sentiments. They must show that the word is of this signification as used in the holy scriptures. This word is entitled to the same privileges and treatment in respect to its *scriptural* import that are kindly indulged, even by our brethren themselves to other words of the same origin.

Had the time and labor, expended by many of our brethren in pondering the pages of Heathen antiquity, and in collecting and retailing the concessions of Christian writers founded upon those pages, with a view to establish their peculiar sentiments, been spent in pondering the pages of Divine inspiration, in search of the scriptural meaning of the term before us, their painful efforts had been far more wisely directed.

It will not be denied that, since the days of the reformation, or for the period of three hundred years past there have been as many distinguished for learning, as existed at any former period, Of these 99 out of an 100 that have practiced baptism in any mode have done it by sprinkling or affusion. More than this proportion practice baptism in this mode, of those who are best entitled to the epithet learned at the present day. Either a great majority of the present learned world are notoriously dishonest in their sentiments and practice, or they believe and *think* they know, *differently* from our brethren on this article. With what propriety they can claim a greater part of the learned world as being in their favor, it is not easy to determine.

As to the claims of our brethren to a greater part of the critics on the Greek language, I must beg leave to state that they are certainly ill founded. They have not presented us with a single critic, nor can one be

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found unless among their denomination, that has given their interpretation to the word before us. They have found, and so have we, many who have expressed it as their opinion, that the word includes among its meanings that of plunging—dipping, or immersing—but *Baptist critics* have been the only ones, that have said and maintained, that immersing is its only meaning.—Says Dr. Owen, one of the most pious and distinguished divines and critics of the seventeenth century:—*Baptism is any kind of washing, whether by dipping or sprinkling: putting the thing to be washed into the water, or applying water to the thing itself to be washed.* Says Mr. Leigh, in his Critica Sacra, "*Baptism primarily signifies such a kind of washing, rinsing or cleansing, as is used in bucks where linen is plunged and dipt: Yet it is taken more largely for any kind of washing, rinsing, or cleansing, even where there is no dipping at all.*"

Doctor Featly says, "That Christ no where requires *dipping*, but baptizing."

Four great masters of the Greek tongue, Hesychius, Stephanus, Scapula and Burdœus, have shewn from many quotations out of Classic or Heathen writers, that the word importeth no more than ablution or washing.

Homer, the prince of Grecian poets, represents a lake as being baptized with the blood of a frog.

St. Origen, an accurate scholar of the second century, one thoroughly acquainted with the Greek classics and Greek Testament.—"When commenting on the Baptism of John, thus inquired of the Pharisees,"—"How could you think that Elias, when he should come, would *baptize*, who did not in Ahab's time baptize the wood upon the altar, which was to be washed before it was burnt by the Lord's appearing in

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fire? But he ordered the priests to do that, not once only, but he says, do it the second time, and they did it the second time. And do it the third time; and they did it the third time. Therefore, how could it be likely that this man who did not then *baptize*, but asssigned that work to others, would himself *baptize*, when he should, according to the prophecy of Malachi, again appear here upon the earth."

Whoever will turn to the first book of Kings, XVIII. 33, will learn that Elijah, after having put the wood in order, and cut the bullock in pieces, and laid him on the wood, ordered four barrels to be filled with water, and the water to be *poured on* the burnt sacrifice, and on the wood. This he ordered to be twice repeated. This *pouring* of water, this renowned scholar and divine, of the primitive ages of christianity, called baptizing. His views, therefore, of the term *baptize*, must have widely differed from those entertained by our brethren. And doubtless his views coincided with those generally entertained in his day.

Many Baptist writers, as it is believed, have been guilty of no small degree of unfairness, in the manner in which they have quoted the opinions of deceased critics and expositors. They have not given a fair view of their real sentiments on this subject. While they have, perhaps, exhibited the truth, they have not exhibited the *whole truth*. They have suppressed, in a great measure, if not intirely, what these critics & expositors have advanced, *unfavorable* to their own sentiments. The inquiring, unsuspecting reader is, by this means, led to form erroneous conclusions, even to believe that a great number of persons, highly distinguished for piety and learning, taught what they did not teach, viz. that the word *baptizo* means exclusively to *dip*, to plunge or immerse, whereas these very wri-

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ters only expressed this as being one of its meanings. Pursuing the same course, an advocate for sprinkling might present his reader with the same authority in support of his views.

Were a Socinian to present his readers with those sentences in the writings of Trinitarians, in which the humanity of Christ *only* is asserted, as proof that these writers held that Christ was *only a man;* he would, in the view of every one, be guilty of manifest dishonesty. A course of conduct little less deserving of censure, are those pursuing who present their readers or hearers with insulated remarks, or sentences from the writings of divines, eminent for piety and learning, who baptized in no other mode than affusion or sprinkling themselves, as proof that they held to the exclusive validity of immersion. A good cause needs not a bad defence, neither will it shrink from beholding the whole truth.

Omitting the critical remarks of Zelenus, Beza, Wickliff, Hammond, Whitaker, Lightfoot, Mastricht, and others, who supposed that the word before us means to sprinkle and to pour, as well as to dip.* I will close with some extracts from the writings of two gentlemen, Mr. John Horsey, and the late Doctor Hopkins.

Says the former—"Baptism is an equivocal, open, general term—Nothing is determined by it further than this, that water should be applied to the subject, in some form or other. The mode of use is only the ceremonial part of a positive institute; just as in the sup-

* The reader is referred to Dr. Reed's apology for infant baptism, letter X. where he will find an interesting view of the more judicious and learned criticisms on this controverted term.

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per of our Lord, the time of day, the number and posture of communicants, the quality & quantity of bread and wine, are circumstances not accounted essential, by any party of christians. Sprinkling, pouring and plunging, are perfectly equivalent and equally valid."

The latter observes, "that the mode of baptism, and the form and manner of applying and using water, does not appear to be decidedly fixed in scripture: That when the scriptures are carefully examined, it will not appear that plunging was instituted by Christ, or practiced by the apostles; or that the original word, translated baptism, or to baptize, invariably signifies plunging the whole body under water. This, says he, has been particularly proved over and over again, by writers upon the subject. Therefore, their opinion & practice, appear most agreeable to scripture, who think that no particular form of applying water in baptism is there prescribed, either by precept or example, or by any thing said on this point."

"And they seem to be rigid, beyond any scripture warrant, and, in a degree superstitious, who insist that all shall be baptized by plunging, and reject all those to whom water has not been applied in this particular mode, as not baptized. This is doubtless making that essential to this ordinance which the scriptures have not made so, and rejecting those from christian communion, and the privileges of the visible church, whom Christ receives. If they who have adopted this mode of baptism, by plunging, did not make it a term of communion, and exclude all as not baptized, who have not had water applied to them in this particular way, and not visible christians, the dispute and contention would be at an end; and they who think and practice differently, might hold communion with each other, and be

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members of the same churches; though baptized in different modes." System Divinity vol. II, p. p. 261-2.

But I do not adduce these opinions, respectable and deserving of attention as they really are, as decisive in the present case. My own opinion rests not on this ground. Neither would I have the opinion of my hearers.

Let us now appeal to the scriptures, to the law and to the testimony, & see in what sense the Holy Ghost, the Spirit of truth, hath used the word there. If on examination, it be found that it exclusively signifies to *dip*, or *immerse*, as here used, then let us adopt that meaning and practice accordingly.

Though the word frequently occurs in the original of the new testament, it has not once been translated either to *dip*, *or plunge*, *or immerse*. It is not a little singular that the translators, if they in any degree adopted the sentiments of our brethren, had not in some one instance given their rendering to the word. In all the instances, in which it is used in reference to the sacrament of baptism, they have translated it *baptize*.—In other instances they have translated it by the term *wash*. It being the custom of the Pharisees and of all the Jews who held the tradition of the elders, not to eat without first washing their hands, they were at a certain time offended at the disciples of Christ for omitting this practice.

And when they came from the market, saith the inspired penman, *except they wash*, Gr. *baptize—they eat not.*

It is a well known and authenticated fact, that the Jews washed their hands by pouring water on them—that they washed *at* a vessel rather than *in* it.

Elisha poured water *on* the hands of Elijah. 2 Kings 3, 11. Such an application of water to the *hands only*, is here termed by the spirit of inspiration, *baptizing*.

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And many other things, adds the inspired penman, *they have received to hold, as the washing*, Gr. baptisms, *of cups, pots, brazen vessels, and tables.* Mark 7, 4.

Will any one maintain that these articles were baptized, or washed by a total immersion in water? None can suppose it.

The apostle, Heb. 9, 10, speaking of the Jewish service, represents it as standing in diverse washings, Gr. *diverse baptisms.*

How were these diverse washings, or baptisms administered? I answer by pouring or sprinkling, as is evident from the ceremonial law generally.

Those which appertained to *persons*, were administered by sprinkling. See Num. 8, 7. *And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, take the Levites from the children of Israel and cleanse* or baptize them. *And thus shalt thou do unto them, to cleanse or* baptize them — *Sprinkle water of purifying upon them.*

From these and similar passages abounding in scripture, it cannot but be inferred that the word under consideration has been frequently employed by the inspired writers to denote partial washings, and washings too performed by sprinkling or pouring.

This fact being admitted, as it certainly must be, by all candid perusers of the sacred oracles, the interpretation which our brethren put upon the word, falls to the ground. The spirit of truth hath contradicted it.— While there is not *a single passage* of scripture, in which it can *certainly* be determined, that the word baptizo is used to denote *dipping*, or *immersing*, there are *several* in which it is certainly used to express *pouring* or *sprinkling.*

It is very evident from many passages of scripture, that a body may be said to be baptized, or washed, when water has only been applied to a single part of it.—

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Aaron and his sons are represented as having washed or baptized themselves at the laver, when they had applied water only to their hands and feet. Exodus, 40, 12, 30, 31.

"It being usual with the Jews before eating, to wash their feet, a practice which had become necessary both from the fashion of their dress, and their manner of reclining on their couches at their customary meals—Christ in order to give his disciples a lesson at once of humility and purity, condescended himself to wash their feet. When Peter understood the meaning of this rite, that it was symbolical of his purification and acceptance with his Lord, he exclaimed in the fervor of his zeal, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head."

But as what the Saviour was doing, was only a symbolical action, cleansing that part of the body which it was customary to wash at that time, was sufficient to answer the intention; therefore he replies to Peter, he that is washed needeth not to wash save his feet, but is clean every whit."* John 13, 6, 10.

When the woman poured oil on the head of our Saviour, he called it an anointing of his body.

As the apostles and the inspired pennmen of the N. Testament, used the word *baptizo* in a different sense from immersion, so did Christ himself. *The same day in which he ascended up to Heaven, he said to his disciples, John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.* Acts 1, 5.

Substitute dip, plunge, or immerse for baptize in this memorable passage and what an absurd, heart-chilling expression should we have. *John truly dipped, plunged, or immersed with water, but you shall be*

* Pres. Smith's sermon.

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dipped, plunged, or immersed with the Holy Ghost not many days hence!!

But strange to tell, and painful to believe, our brethare so confident in their interpretation of this term, that notwithstanding such difficulties, they adhere to it. Though the Spirit, in the fulfilment of this promise, was poured out, was shed forth, and communicated to the apostles, in his extraordinary influences; yet, says a celebrated writer* on the baptist side of the controversy,—"*He was so poured out and in such a degree, that the apostles were, like a patient in the electric bath, as if IMMERSED IN IT.*"

The parties in this unpleasant controversy, attempt to defend their respective modes of baptism by what they understand the ordinance to express or to represent.

Our brethren suppose that the end of baptism, is to represent the death or burial of Christ, and hence they argue the absolute necessity of immersion, for in no other mode, as they suppose, can a burial be represented. To represent a burial appears to be their leading object in administering the ordinance. This cannot but be inferred from what is usually said "by the water side," and from what has been published and circulated far and wide by a host of pamphleteers.

We on the other hand, while we suppose that baptism whether administered to adults or infants, is a token of God's gracious covenant with his visible church, maintain that an important design of it, is to represent the effects of the spirit, in his operations on the souls of men. And as the spirit, in all his influences, is every where represented in scripture as poured out, shed forth, or communicated—we argue that baptism should be administered by pouring, sprinkling, or affusion.

* Mr. Booth.

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Let us impartially attend to these two opposite supposed expressions of this christian ordinance.

First, let us inquire whether the design of baptism can be to represent the death or burial of Christ.

Is it any where said or intimated in scripture that this is the design of it? Certainly not.

To suppose that this is the design of it, is in effect to make both the sacraments have a primary respect to the same event. The great object of the supper is to show forth Christ in his death, and to commemorate and to hold it in remembrance to the end of the world.

It does not appear from any instances of baptism recorded in scripture, that this is in any degree the design of the institution. When John baptized Christ, so far from designing to make a representation of his burial, he only designed to introduce him to Israel, to the church of God, as their prophet priest and king.—*That he* should be *made manifest to Israel*, said he, *therefore am I come baptizing with water*, John1 31. When John baptized with the baptism of repentance, he directed the subjects to *believe on him who should come after him.* Acts 19, 4. It may be seriously questioned whether John or his disciples had any distinct knowledge respecting the approaching death and burial of the Redeemer. The latter certainly had not.

Peter commanded the three thousand on the day of Penticost to be baptized, not to follow Christ into the water, neither to represent his death or burial, but *because the promise was to them and their children.*

It is extremely difficult, if not impossible to conceive how the idea could be entertained, in any case of baptism, recorded in scripture, that the design of the ordinance is what our brethren suppose.

Besides, a living body, put in, held under, and raised out of water by living hands, seems very aukwardly

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indeed to represent the body of our Savior, either as dying on the cross, or locked up and guarded by a band of Roman soldiers, in a tomb cut out of a solid rock, and perfectly dry. The resemblance if there be any, does not appear. How a living body hastily sinking backwards into the water, or *rising* hastily out of it can possibly represent a dead body enclosed, and perfectly motionless, in the darkness and silence of the tomb, or a dying body, in an erect posture, extended and agonizing upon a cross, is a mystery which I believe but few can comprehend. It requires a faith of which most are happily destitute, to believe that divine wisdom has ever appointed an ordinance as expressive for that to which it has not the least perceptible resemblance. Had Christ *been drowned* instead of being *crucified*, or interred in *water*, rather than in a tomb, immersion in baptism might have been a representation of his death and burial.

When our Savior, in allusion to his own sufferings and death, informed his Apostles that he had a baptism to be baptized with, and that they should be baptized with the same baptism, he exhibited two particulars that had a striking resemblance to each other.

The sufferings and death of the Apostles, as they were generally crucified, or died as martyrs, bore an almost exact resemblance to those of Christ. Now to represent by an immersion of a living body in water what Apostles could only represent by toil, sufferings and martyrdom, must be actually impossible. It is too easy and quick a method of doing it. No—till we have toiled, suffered and died for Christ ourselves, as did his primitive disciples, we never shall have been baptized in a manner representing his death, or his sufferings.

In support of the idea now under consideration, our

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brethren make a frequent use of certain figurative passages of scripture. The first is in Romans 6, 3. 5. *Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall also be in the likeness of his resurrection. Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

The other is Col. 2. 10, 11, 12. *Ye are complete in him*, i. e. Christ, *in whom ye also are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ, buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.*

Of these two passages, the only parts used by our brethren as applicable to their purpose, are the phrases, *buried with him by baptism, and in baptism.*

These phrases, disconnected from what precedes and follows them, as employed by the Baptists, frequently occasion a kind of presumption, or prejudice in favor of immersion. The impression which they design to make, and which in many instances they do make, is that baptism is a burial, and intended to represent the burial of Christ.

To produce this effect, it is taken as an acknowledged truth that allusions are made in these passages to the mode of baptism, rather than to baptism itself, or the obligations implied in it; with what propriety will perhaps appear on a careful consideration of the passages themselves.

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No Baptist, or any other person in his senses, can suppose that water baptism in any mode, can produce, or that it invariably stands connected with the several effects here enumerated. All that can in reason be pretended is, that it is an outward sign of these effects. Simon Magus was doubtless baptized in a scriptural mode, yet none of these effects were connected with his baptism, and the same no doubt has been the case with the baptism of thousands, and thousands besides.

Let us for a moment attend to the effects certainly produced by, or connected with the baptism of which mention is here primarily made. These effects are three, union to Christ himself, *baptized into Christ*; union to his death, "*baptized into his death*;" union to his burial, "*buried with him by baptism.*"

Of these respective unions, the baptism here mentioned is the instrumental cause. They are all effected by it,

Now what do these unions signify, or in other words what is done when a person by baptism is brought into Christ, into his death, and buried with him? I answer, there is produced a union of heart to him in love and faith, and a conformity to him in that temper which he exercised in his life and in his death. This important change in heart and life, the Apostle represents towards the close of the first cited passage, in these words, "*Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

What the Apostle, in the second cited passage, means when he addresses the believing Colossians, *as being circumcised, in Christ with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ*, he also means, where he addresses them, as being buried with

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him in a baptism, in which they were risen with him thro' the faith of the operation of God, who had raised him from the dead.

As spiritual circumcision is intended in the first clause, so spiritual baptism is intended in the second. Outward circumcision and outward baptism therefore signify, or express the same thing, viz. a renovation and sanctification of the heart.

Keeping these conclusions in view, let us inquire what there is in either of these passages, determining that the mode of outward baptism must be immersion.

If it be said that the Apostle, when he says *buried with him by baptism*, alludes to the mode of baptism, it may with equal propriety and certainty be said, that he alludes to the mode of baptism where he speaks of *being baptized into Christ, and into his death*, and, therefore, for precisely the same reasons, that water baptism, *in its mode*, must resemble the burial of Christ, must it resemble his person, and his crucifixion. What a mode of baptism this would be, no mortal can tell.—The fact is, that the *mode* of baptism can no more be determined from what baptism *signifies*, than the mode of circumcision can be determined from what circumcision itself signified.

"As it was not the *mode* of circumcision that made it signify the renovation of the heart, so it is not the mode of baptism that makes it signify the same fruit of the spirit." The *effects* of the internal washing of regeneration, may be represented by the *effects* of an external application of water, but they cannot be represented by any *mode* of applying water.

If our remarks upon these passages be correct, the inference which our brethren deduce from them, is inconsistent with their scope and meaning.

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By the same process in reasoning by which they attempt, from these passages, to support immersion as essential to baptism, may we maintain that the sign of the cross is essential to it. For the persons, addressed by Paul, are no more clearly represented, as having been buried with Christ in baptism, than they are represented as having been *planted together in the likeness of his death.* There is certainly a much stronger allusion to the sign of the cross, in the latter phrase, than there is to the entombment of Christ, in the former.

I cannot here forbear to state the words of a distinguished Divine, who was once himself a Baptist, at the close of a review of these passages.* "Upon the whole, the examination of this place convinces me of nothing so much as this, that both the Baptists in general and myself in particular, have been carried away with the mere *sound* of a word, even to the neglect of the sense and scope of the truth of God."

Let us now inquire whether baptism expresses the effects of the spirit in his influences on the souls of men.

That it does, appears from several considerations.—The effects of both are purifying, the one consists in putting away the filthiness of the flesh, the other the filthiness of the spirit.

The effects of each are repeatedly called by the same name. Both are termed baptism and very frequently connected in the same passage, as in Mat. 3, 11, *I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but he that cometh after me, he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire,* and in many other places.

It clearly appearing from these and other reasons, that the design of baptism is to be a sign of the effects of the operation of the spirit, rather than to represent

* Peter Edwards, Can. Rea. p. p. 171.

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the death or the burial of Christ, we feel authorized to administer water in it in a mode resembling the one in which the spirit is communicated in his gifts and influences.

Learning from our Bibles, that He is "shed forth and poured out," in those gifts and influences; reading that "He shall come down like the rain upon the mown grass, as showers that water the earth;" hearing the Most High saying to his people "I will sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean, and I will be as the dew unto Israel;" reading that Christ "loved his church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, and also that believers are saved, not by works of righteousness but by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost:"——

I say, when we read these and similar passages, we feel authorized to administer baptism by affusion, or sprinkling rather than by immersion. We verily think, that the scriptures favor that mode of baptism, in which water is applied to the *subject*, rather than the one in which the *subject* is applied to the water. We nevertheless allow the validity of immersion, and are willing to consider and fellowship those *regularly* baptized in this way, as baptized persons, yet we cannot view it as the mode most favored by scripture, nor the one best comporting with the situation of the church, scattered as it now is, and as it hereafter will more fully be, in the several climates and regions of the earth: ours being a mode capable of administration "at any place, whether at home or abroad; in any situation, whether in sickness or in health; in any apparel usual, or unusual; in any season, whether cold or hot, wet or dry, and in any hour of the twenty-four, whether morning, noon or night."

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As Christ has imposed on his church no heavier burden in respect to baptism than this, we can see neither virtue nor propriety in practicing any heavier one. We suppose that Christ lays down all the crosses which he requires us to take up, and when we hear our brethren say so much about the cross which there is in their baptism, and the greatness of the goodness and humility requisite to take it up, we cannot refrain from putting to them an inquiry, which in another case they put to us, *who hath required this at thine hands.*

There is no evidence with which we are acquainted to believe that Christ ever designed the ordinance of baptism to be a cross, and if he did not, there is no goodness, or propriety in making it one.—If there be, then the greater the cross is made, the more difficult and painful the rite becomes, by appendages and additions of human invention—the more virtue and goodness there will be in taking it up.

Here my remarks might close, but there are two or three topics of argument not yet noticed, to which our brethren resort to support the exclusive validity of their mode of baptism. "Say they, the Apostle informs us that there is one faith, one baptism."

That there is but one faith, and but one baptism that are saving, is no doubt correct, and that there are several species of faith and of baptism that are not saving is also certain. The scriptures speak of a dead faith, and of the faith of miracles, neither of which had any connection in itself with eternal life. They also speak of a baptism by water, a baptism by sufferings, and a baptism by the Holy Ghost. The latter no doubt is the baptism intended in the words before us. By *one* spirit all true christians are "baptized into one body, whether Jew or Gentiles, whether bond or free."

But by the *one baptism* here mentioned, the Baptists

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appear to understand, *one mode* of administering water baptism, which mode is theirs, viz. immersion.

Now admitting that the Apostle here speaks of baptism by water, how will our brethren prove, that he here asserts that there is but one valid mode of applying water in this baptism, and if we admit this, how will they show that theirs is this mode? Can they do it by resorting to the *examples* of baptism recorded in scripture? Certainly not. When they determine immersion from either of these, they decide without evidence, they guess, they presume!! Can they do it by resorting to the word *baptizo?* No. This word in itself determines no mode, and, in its scriptural use and import, favors the one which they disown and despise. Can they do this, by resorting to any allusions to water baptism contained in scripture? No. These allusions determine for certainty no mode. Very remote are they from even favoring immersion. Can they do this by recurring to the testimony of Ecclesiastical Historians? Certainly not. More than *one mode* of using water in Baptism has been practised in every period since the days of the Apostles. Those who most generally practised immersion in some of the first centuries of christianity, did occasionally baptize by affusion or sprinkling. Nor have those who have practised immersion, maintained an exact *uniformity* in respect to that mode.

"The ancient christians, says Dr. Wall, when they were baptized by immersion, *were baptized naked*, whether they were men, women or children." It is also a well authenticated fact, that among the first, immermersions of which we have an account, in ecclesiastical history, the subject was immersed *three times*, once

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in the name of each person in the Trinity, and that he was *signed with the cross* and on coming up out of the water was clad in white robes, and fed with a mixture of honey and milk.

When the Baptists declare that "the whole christian church, for 1300 years successively from the time of the Apostles, understood by baptism, *immersion*, and so practised," they *declare* quite too much, and *imply* vastly more than is true. Were they to say that for 1300 years successively from the time of the Apostles, the *mode* of applying water in baptism was viewed as *circumstantial*, and not essential to the validity of the ordinance, they would be vastly nearer the truth. Ecclesiastical history informs us of no church, of no sect, of no minister until the twelfth century, that considered a total immersion or dipping of the body in water as essential to baptism. Antecedently to this period, Baptists with respect to the mode of baptism, i e. persons who maintain that immersion is essential to baptism, and who refuse to commune with those not baptized in this mode, are certainly unknown in history. Baptists know and many of them have been frank enough to concede, that sprinkling, near the days of the Apostles, was frequently practised and allowed to be valid. Cyprian, speaking of sprinkling, says, "*In the sacrament of salvation* (i. e. baptism) *when necessity compels, the shortest way of transacting divine matters, do, by God's grace, confer the whole benefit.*" "Tertullian, speaking to an impenitent person, asks, *who will afford thee one sprinkling of water* (asperginem unam cujuslibet aquæ) *for baptism.*" We are informed that Laurence the Martyr, a contemporary with Cyprian, baptized a Roman Soldier *with a pitcher of water*, and also one Lucillus by *pouring* water on his head. Athanasius, speaking of those who were baptized by Here-

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tics, says; *they who are sprinkled by them are further defiled by a corrupt religion, than redeemed.*" Besides, the ancients, who generally practised immersion, after dipping the body did usually apply water to the face. These facts, as well as many others that might be adduced, concur in proving that *no one mode* of using water in baptism, has been *exclusively* followed, in *any one age* since the days of the Apostles, and that the primitive christians, intirely unlike our brethren, considered no mode of baptism as essential to the ordinance.

If the mode of using water in baptism, be essential to the validity of the ordinance, then no mortal can tell whether he has ever been baptized or not. Our brethren can no more do it than others. To say, as they confidently do, that immersion is the divinely appointed mode of baptism, is saying vastly too much, altogether more than has ever been proved, and more than ever can be proved, while the bible speaks its present language. Certain it is that no precise mode for the application of water is prescribed in the original institution of Baptism. This we certainly have reason to believe would have been done, had the mode of applying water constituted the validity of the ordinance, or been essential to it in the view of Christ.—On the ground of this omission, we cannot believe what our brethren assert on this article. Says Dr. Reed, "If it had been the intention of Christ and his Apostles, to specify the mode, or to have restricted all christians to one and the same mode of baptizing, they might, for this purpose, have selected from the Greek language words of the most unequivocal and definitive signification. If it had been their intention to specify the mode of *sprinkling*, they might have used the word *Rantizo*; if the mode of pouring, they might have used

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the word *Ekcheo ;* if that mode of *bathing* or washing, which is performed by the application of water with friction or rubbing, they might have used the word *Louo ;* and if it had been their intention to specify the mode of *dipping*, they might have used the word *Dupto* or *Duno.*"

Some of the Baptists, more expert than others, in discovering allusions to their mode of baptism on the sacred page have suspected that there is something favoring their sentiments in those words of the Apostle. 1 Cor. 15. 29, *Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead.*

As the grand design of baptism, as administered by the Baptists, is to represent the burial of Christ, it is absolutely necessary, that this passage may favor their scheme, that the word *dead* should have exclusive reference to Christ in his state of death. But unhappily the word is plural; it means *dead persons*, rather than a *dead person.* This single circumstance must forever totally unfit this passage, to be incorporated into the Baptist scheme.

We have now adverted to the several points and topics that are concerned in this unpleasant controversy.

Let all be warned from what has been said, not to embrace erroneous views on the ordinance of baptism. Views of it may be entertained, and indeed are entertained, subversive of its original design, and highly detrimental to the cause of religion.

Place not its chief importance in the *mode* but in the ADORABLE NAMES, in which water is applied. Were the high import of *these names* properly considered, and the sacredness of that act in which they are pronounced over a person, noticed, less dispute would there be respecting the mode of applying water, in this christian rite.

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Particularly let me warn you against those views on this subject, which, put in practice, would exclude from your christian fellowship, all who have received baptism in a different mode from yourselves.

I allude to the sentiment, that immersion is the only valid mode of baptism, and that those not thus baptized, are unbaptized persons, and as a consequence, have not a right to a seat at the TABLE OF OUR LORD.

Such sentiments exist, and, with no small share of zeal, are inculcated in the place and country where we reside. I know not as there is a single person present disposed to embrace these sentiments, but as they exist, I feel it to be my duty on this occasion to warn you against them.

To adopt and to live agreeably to these sentiments, you must adopt and practise what you can never be certain is taught in the word of God. From this word as has already been shown, it never can be proved, that immersion is essential to baptism, or that the Apostles ever practised it, or that they baptized in no other mode. Neither can it be proved from this word; that the reception of baptism in this mode was a term of communion in the Apostolic churches. No, adopting and practising these sentiments, you will have nothing in the Bible, nor in the example of the Apostles to support you.

To adopt these sentiments, and to live agreeably to them, you must all your days act in hostility to the known and confessed example of Christ himself. You must withhold communion from those with whom you cannot but acknowledge he communes, so that while you may pray for grace ever so fervently to imitate his example, you will be under covenant promises and vows to act contrary to it. And if, to justify your-

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selves in a species of conduct so intirely opposite to the present ways of Christ in regard to all who believe on him, you plead any thing taught in his word, you will only attempt to prove that He has forbidden his followers to *follow him, to be like* him in the exercise of his goodness and tender mercy.

And to adopt these sentiments, and to live agreeably to them, you must all your days act in hostility to the peace and welfare of all churches not baptized in your own particular mode. As you cannot, consistently with your sentiments, consider them as properly churches, so you cannot treat them as such. You may indeed esteem every member as a christian, but cannot without a gross departure from your sentiments, consider or treat him as a member of the visible church of Christ:—

And as you must view it as wrong in him, unbaptized as you consider him, while in his present state, to enjoy ecclesiastical privileges, especially to come to the sacrament of the supper, you cannot, consistently with the law of brotherly love, do less than tell him so, and do every thing in your power to unsettle his mind as to his baptism, and to bring him over to your ground.

I do not mean to insinuate that all, embracing these sentiments, conduct in this manner. The goodness of the hearts of some, overrules the errors of their heads, and they appear to be willing that other denominations should enjoy and practise agreeably to their sentiments, and to pray fervently that their churches may be enlarged and built up.

But, in so doing they act in direct opposition to their sentiments. What; pray that churches may be enlarged and built up which you consider to be no churches, and with whom you view it a sin to commune at the sacramental table!! No—To pray agreeably to

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your sentiments, you must pray that they may be destroyed as churches though perhaps saved as individuals! And what is equally as bad, to act agreeably to your sentiments, you must seek their destruction!!

Yes, were those entertaining these sentiments, to act in all respects agreeably to them, they would *all* be far more engaged than *any* of them now are, in efforts to unsettle the minds of other churches on the subject of baptism: Yea, they would indeed be Ishmaelites, with hands raised high against all christian denominations not agreeing with them in this particular, causing division, dissention and animosity among the very persons, with whom they should be united in exertions to do good and to advance the common interests of Zion!!

And all this for what? Not because water has not been applied to them in the names of the *persons* in the Trinity, but because they have not been applied to water in these names, or rather because they have not been baptized in the same manner with themselves.

Such are some of the consequences of the errors, strictly followed, to which you are exposed, and against which I solemnly warn you.

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem and seek it. For they shall prosper that love her. Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word; THAT THEY ALL MAY BE ONE; *as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us:* THAT THE WORLD MAY BELIEVE THAT THOU HAST SENT ME. *Amen.*

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SERMON II.

ON THE SUBJECTS

OF

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

Acts, 16, 15.—*And when she was baptized and her household, she besought us saying, if ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there.*

The question now to be discussed is this—Who are the proper subjects of christian baptism?

That professed believers are proper subjects for this ordinance, is admitted on all hands, but that the infant seed of such believers are proper subjects for it is by some denied.

All acquainted with the practice of Pœdo-baptists, are sensible that they not only baptize the children of the members of the church as soon after their birth as the rite can with convenience be administered, but also that on the admission of parents to the church they baptize those of their children which at the time are properly under their nurture and care. For the same

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reasons that they baptize infants in the first case, do they baptize those advanced from infancy in the second.

In the following discourse, it will be my object to shew that this practice is scriptural.

Before attending directly to the subject, however, I shall briefly notice the leading objections that are urged against this practice.

Not only on the *mode* but also on the *subjects* of baptism our brethren have brought into the field of action all their powers, and it may in truth be said of many, that they have written and spoken with ability. What learning, zeal and talents can accomplish, has more than once been achieved, to limit the subjects of this institute to *professed believers.* Yet the great body of the christian world continue in the practice which our brethren so zealously condemn and which they have so industriously labored to disprove.

Their principal objections shall be noticed here, the others shall be considered in the prosecution of the subject.

They allege that we derive our arguments, favoring infant baptism from the silence of the scriptures. Inasmuch as the scriptures have not expressly forbidden it, they represent us as feeling fully authorized to practise it.

Says one, * "When our mode of obedience to a positive institute instead of better ground, resorts to this that there is absolutely no text or sentence in the Bible forbidding it, or that there is nothing in the scriptures against it, it establishes to us one point, and but one, that is, that the cause which requires it, labors exceedingly."

Whether it be true or false that Pœdo-Baptists reason according to this representation, whether there is;

* Dr. Baldwin.

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or is not any "better ground" than the silence of scripture, or its supposed destitution of every thing opposed to infant baptism from which to argue in favor of the practice, will perhaps appear to every candid reader in the following discourse. If on a careful examination, it be found that there is "absolutely no text or sentence in the Bible opposed to the practice and only a few that favor it, our situation will not appear so deeply disconsolate, nor will our cause "labor so exceedingly" as the above representation appears to intimate. It will probably be admitted, if infant baptism be not prohibited in scripture, that it cannot be a very sinful practice, for it is generally considered and correctly too, that all sin is there forbidden.

But our brethren are not willing to indulge us this state of comparative innocence. They proceed to prove that our practice is virtually forbidden in scripture. And how do they do it? The answer is; almost in the same manner in which they represent that we proceed to prove that it is inculcated there, viz. in resorting to the silence of the scriptures. As we, according to their representation, believe the scriptures command what they do not expressly prohibit, so they taking directly opposite ground, suppose that the scriptures prohibit what they do not expressly command.

Say they, infant baptism is no where expressly commanded in scripture, and hence their conclusion is that the practice is expressly forbidden. Their reasoning is wholly upon this principle. *We must do nothing in the way of religious worship which we are not expressly commanded to do.* The texts usually referred to in support of this point are the following, "Whatsoever things I command you, observe to do it. thou shalt not add thereto neither diminish from it. In vain do you worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments

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of men. Who hath required this at thine hands?"— These and similar passages are frequently repeated in the ears of Pœdo-Baptist parents and ministers, to dissuade them from their present practice.

If it indeed be true that we are actually *prohibited* to do in a way of religious worship whatever we are not *expressly* commanded to do, it will inevitably follow that both Baptists and ourselves have been verily guilty in several important particulars. None since the days of the Apostles have been expressly commanded to preach the Gospel, or to administer either baptism or the Lord's supper. In no part of the scriptures are we commanded to observe the first day of the week as a season for religious duties and exercises, or to pray in our families morning and evening. In no part of scripture is there an express command for the admission of females to the Lord's supper, nor for many other particulars which both baptists and ourselves have practiced as parts of religious worship. We are unable to prove the perpetuity of the christian ministry the perpetuity and change of the sabbath, the continuance of the christian sacraments in the church and the right of the pastors of particular churches to administer them, and the right of females to communion at the table of the Lord, by any other species of reasoning than the one which we adopt to prove the right of the infant seed of believers to baptism. If this species of reasoning be inadmissible in respect to the duties and institutions of religious worship then infant baptism must indeed fall, but it will not fall alone. The christian ministry the christian sacraments, the christian sabbath, and all positive duties and institutions will fall with it. The very instrument which the Baptists have fabricated and sharpened for the destruction of infant

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baptism, would as really destroy these other institutes if applied to them, as this.

Our Baptist brethren have not proved, neither are they able to prove, that an express command is essential to constitute a warrant for the administration of any christian rite. This is a sentiment no where taught in scripture, and it is difficult to ascertain in what sense they believe it themselves, since their practice in every thing else appertaining to religious worship than infant baptism, is inconsistent with it.—Ask one of them to show the warrant which he has to preach the Gospel, or which females have to come to the Lord's supper, and he will immediately resort to that mode of reasoning which Pœdo-baptists adopt to prove the right of infant baptism.

We may be virtually commanded to do that for which we have no express command. Paul and Barnabas were virtually commanded to preach the Gospel to the Gentiles, although they were not expressly commanded to do it. Acts 13, 46. And for reasons which will hereafter be stated, may infant baptism be *virtually* commanded, though an *express* command for it be no where found.

The scriptures, continue our brethren, record no certain instances of infant baptism. They inform us that our practice is wholly without precedent on the sacred page, that the baptisms of which we have an account are all the baptisms of professed believers.

Whether all the baptisms of which we have an account in scripture are, or are not the baptisms of professed believers, will be considered in another part of the discourse. For the present, let us admit what our brethren so confidently and so frequently assert.—— Would it certainly follow that none but professed believers, during the days of the Apostles, were bapti-

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sed? Certainly not. It is conceived that a Shaker might as conclusively argue from these premises that none baptized in the days of the Apostles had children as do our brethren that no children were baptized.—The fact is, neither the conclusion of the Shaker on the one hand, nor that of our brethren on the other, is contained in the premises before us. As the Baptists suppose that what is not expressly commanded in regard to baptism is expressly prohibited, so they appear to suppose that what is not related in respect to it, never took place. They are willing however to believe that the men and women mentioned as receiving baptism at the hands of the Apostles, had children, although no mention is made of it, because if they had none, the case would furnish no argument against infant baptism.

Let us grant that these men and women had children. What would certainly follow? Why reply our brethren, "they were not baptized!" But how, we ask, can this be certainly determined? Why, say they there is no record made of it.

Let us apply this mode of reasoning to another case. We have an account in the New Testament of the establishment of several churches and not a word is related in regard to their baptism. As nothing in relation to the administration of baptism in the days of the apostles, could have taken place which is not recorded, these churches certainly were not baptized!!

But can the Baptists find on the sacred page a record of a solitary example in their favor? Can they point us to a single descendant of a believer, in the days of the apostles, that was baptized at adult age? Can they prove that in any case of adult baptism administered by the apostles, the subject was a child of parents who at his birth or a few years afterwards,

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were professed believers? No such cases—no such examples are recorded, and, as a consequence, our brethren, in withholding baptism from the infant seed of believers, act without example, and wholly without precedent. It is as really a part of their system to suffer the seed of believers to become adults before baptism, as it is a part of ours to baptize them while in infancy: A *certain* example in apostolic practice favoring this part of their system, they certainly have not, let the case be with us as it may.

It is further objected that repentance and faith are the appointed conditions of baptism, and that the apostles required a profession of these graces before they administered the ordinance, and that Christ in the baptismal commission which he gave his apostles, commanded them *to preach the gospel to every creature, to teach all nations*, baptizing them in the name of the Trinity, and added, that "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned*, manifestly implying that none but believers were to be baptized, and, by consequence, direct evidence is here furnished, that Christ intended to exclude the infants of baptized believers from baptism."

As this is a material argument with our brethren, it may not be improper somewhat carefully to examine it.

That the Apostles required a profession of faith and repentance in adults in order to baptism is most cheerfully admitted. All evangelical Pœdo-baptists do the same. When an unbaptized adult inquires of them what is necessary for him in order to baptism, they decidedly inform him, "repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ." In requiring such a profession of an unbaptized adult in order to baptism for himself, they see nothing inconsistent with adminis-

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tering the same ordinance to his infant seed wholly without such a profession, solely on account of that relation to the visible church of God into which by his profession and baptism they are brought.

A profession of faith in the God of Israel was no less necessary in an uncircumcised adult in order to circumcision *formerly*, than is a profession of faith and repentance in an unbaptized adult in order to baptism now. Yet the infant seed of all adults admitted to circumcision on a profession of faith in the God of Israel were admitted to this ordinance also. The want of a profession of faith did not debar them from it, yet their admittance was as really inconsistent with the rule that required a profession of faith as a condition on the part of the adult, as is the admittance of the seed of believers to infant baptism now with the rule that requires a profession of faith on the part of the unbaptized adult.

It is a maxim among logicians that an argument which proves too much, proves nothing. This maxim in its full extent is applicable to the argument against infant baptism drawn by the Baptists from the words of Christ; *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, &c.* If Christ's omitting to mention infants in the commission with which these words stand connected, be indubitable evidence that he meant to exclude them from baptism, then it is indubitable evidence that he intended to exclude them from salvation. For it is as expressly said that those who do not believe shall be *damned*, as those who do believe and are baptized shall be *saved!* There is no evading this consequence. Infants have an existence, and if a Baptist consider these words of Christ as respecting them in relation to the subject of baptism, he must include them somewhere either among the persons to be baptized, or among

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others. "They cannot and they shall not be included among those to be baptized, says he, for they are without faith and cannot exercise it." The consequence is therefore irresistible; they must be included among those who believe not, and who, as Christ has solemnly declared shall be damned.

The moment that Baptists urge the conditions of adult baptism against the baptism of infants, that moment they are obliged to associate them with those unbelievers, who will assuredly perish. Such passages therefore, are conceived to contain no *direct* evidence against infant baptism. They are indeed silent in respect to the subject, and the moment their silence is broken to disprove this practice, that moment they speak a language which even our brethren themselves cannot hear; they turn the dreadful declaration of Christ, *he that believeth not shall be damned*, against the whole infantine world!!!

None should attempt to exclude infants from baptism on the authority of these texts, without being willing, on precisely the same ground, to exclude them from salvation. If, notwithstanding these texts, infants may be saved, as Christ has taught us and as Baptists admit, then notwithstanding these texts, they may be baptized. Though it be said, that *he that believeth not shall be damned*, Yet it is no where said that he who believeth not, shall be debarred from baptism.

But say our brethren again, baptism is termed "*the answer of a good conscience towards God.*" 1 Pet. 3, 21.

That religious parents may answer a good conscience in seeking baptism for their children, and pious ministers do the same in administering it to them, will not be questioned. On these accounts even infant baptism may be the answer of a good conscience towards God; and so it always is when it is piously sought

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and piously administered. But, say the Baptists, "it cannot be the answer of a good conscience towards God, on the part of the infant." This is readily admitted: but with what propriety can this be urged against infant baptism? Is the answering of a good conscience towards God the condition of baptism?—No; it is here declared to be the baptism itself. "*The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also save us, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience towards God,*" This baptism must, therefore, be a condition of salvation, a baptism which, by uniting the soul to Christ in faith and love, becomes the occasion or the means of its salvation. Outward baptism, as it cannot itself save, cannot be the one of which mention is here made. The utmost that can be pretended is, it is a sign of it.

Those, therefore, who suppose that they must be baptized on a profession of their own, in order to receive the baptism here mentioned, are in a mistake.—A person may have a baptism that saves, and yet have never received water baptism and those baptized in infancy have as really received the outward sign of this baptism, as have those baptized at adult age, and water baptism can become no more than a sign of this, however frequently it may be administered.

If the inference drawn by the Baptists against the baptism of infants from their incapacity to answer a good conscience towards God, be correct, it must follow that circumcision could not have been administered to infants, seeing it is said Rom. 2. 28, 29, "*circumcision is not that which is outward in the flesh but of the heart, in the spirit.*" As infants were formerly proper subjects for the outward circumcision, so may they now be proper subjects for outward baptism.

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It was by faith that Noah prepared the Ark, and entered it with his family. The blessing of salvation in the ark, wafted by the waters that destroyed the wicked, was extended to the family of Noah solely in consequence of his faith. This Baptists must admit. Now, if baptism saves agreeably to what is here represented we have a plain reason, instead of limiting the outward ordinance to the adult believer, for extending it to his household. Noah was no more saved by the water which, as the Baptists suppose, was a type of their baptism, than was each of his household. Salvation in consequence of his faith, as really came to his children as to himself. This among many others, is a striking instance of the fact, *that special privileges may be enjoyed by children, in consequence of the faith of their parents.* We here see children, in consequence of a parent's faith, brought to the enjoyment of the same outward privileges with himself.

Nearly allied to the objection last considered is another which the Baptists frequently urge against our practice.— Say they, "as infants are without faith and a capacity to understand the ends of baptism, what good can it do to baptize them?" The objector appears to suppose in this question, that an inability to see what happy consequences can result from the administration of an ordinance, may be a valid excuse for not administering it. Had this principle been adopted while the ceremonial law was in force, many, if not most of the ordinances which it appointed, would have been disregarded. But, wicked as the Jews were in the estimation of Baptists, it no where appears that they ever urged such an objection against any of the institutions of the Almighty. This mode of treating religious ordinances is of modern invention, and it is a consoling consideration that comparatively but few adopt it.

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The Apostle, Rom. 3. 2, has informed us that much advantage was connected with circumcision every way. Infants, it is well known, were the principal subjects of this rite. In the reception of it, they were marked and distinguished as being within that gracious covenant according to which the visible church is formed; a seal and token of important privileges were conveyed to them, and they became debtors, in a peculiar sense, to obey, when capable of religious views exercises and actions, that law which the church was then under, as a rule of religious worship. More than this, in the administration of the rite, religious parents, in a peculiar manner, apprehended by faith the *Great promise of the Covenant*, "I WILL BE A GOD TO THY SEED," in behalf of their offspring, and solemnly bound themselves religiously to educate them, to bring them up in the fear, nurture and admonition of the Lord, and to do all within their power to restrain them from breaking that covenant, the token of which they had received.

The recollection of this rite was directly calculated to remind those who had received it, in every period of active life, that they were not their own, that they had been marked and distinguished as the Lord's, and consequently that they were peculiarly bound to be his, to live in his fear and in devotedness to his service.

These are a few of the advantages that were formerly connected with infant circumcision. And may not blessings as numerous and as extensive be connected with infant baptism? No one can reasonably question it.

That scheme of religion, properly observed, which embraces infant baptism, brings the rising generation *distinctly* and *steadily* to view, and applies to them a system of means, in the highest degree calculated to

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promote their immortal welfare, and this too at a period in which, as all agree, the Holy Spirit most abundantly strives with the human race and renews a greater part of those who ever are to be prepared for immortal glory. In this respect, it perfectly harmonizes with all the other dispensations of God and economies of religion, and appears every way suited to the condition of our race as probationers for eternity.

Baptists, educated, perhaps, in the contempt of this scheme, and filled with prejudices against it, and disposed to view it only in the *shades* of its abuse, are not in a situation properly to judge of its legitimate tendency and character. "The abuse of the best things renders them the worst." Let this system be raised out of its present state of disuse and abuse, let it be carried *fully out* into all its *practical* consequences; in a word, let Pœdo-baptists *practically* cease to be Baptists, and the question would cease to be asked "what good can it do to baptize infants: Says Mr. Henry, "If *infant baptism* were more conscientiously improved, it would be less disputed."

Where it has been properly improved, what glorious consequences have resulted! Religious parents have felt themselves on peculiarly advantageous ground for urging their children to a godly life. The argument, 'we devoted you to God when an infant, in the rite of baptism, and therefore by living in sin you openly oppose what was then done and acknowledged,' has reached the heart of many a thoughtless youth, when nothing else could move him. That the tendency of this rite on the part of parents, is to lead them to view their children as given away unto God and marked as His, and to remember their obligations to bring them up for him, will not be questioned by any one properly acquainted with the practice.

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Of that system of religion which excludes infants from baptism, such declarations cannot in truth be made. Says one* who once adopted and for several years practised agreeably to this scheme: "There is one fault among others in the Baptist system, that it places the rising generation so entirely out of sight. I do not mean, that the Baptists themselves do this, for their conduct in this respect is much better than their system; but their *system* places them out of sight.—And in this, it differs from all the dispensations of God, of which we have any particular knowledge; which alone would lead to a presumption that it is not of God."

Our brethren further object against infant baptism, that it is not agreeable to what they term the baptismal example of Christ. Say they, "Christ was baptized at adult age, and on an application for baptism which He himself made. To follow his example, therefore, we must not be baptized in infancy, nor in any other way than on an application for baptism made by ourselves."

The success of a Baptist, in the attainment of followers, almost entirely depends upon his success, in making the impression, that *Christ was baptized by immersion, and as an example for his followers.* This impression, deeply made and strongly fortified by clamorous appeals to the conscience and assurances that unless we follow his example we must be damned, accomplishes two objects: It secures, in view of its subject the exclusive validity of immersion, and at the same time convinces him that he must, as an act of his own, receive baptism in this mode to be a real disciple of his Lord. Where these two objects are accomplished, a Baptist is made, and a willingness produced to renounce infant baptism, if it have been received, or any other not consisting in immersion.

* Peter Edwards, Can. Rea. p. p. 190.

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Whether Christ was actually baptized in the mode which our brethren suppose, is submitted to the reader to determine after perusing what is said upon this point in the preceding discourse. Dreadful would be their condition, according to their own sentiments, if after all they have mistaken the mode of their Saviour's baptism.

Let us for a moment inquire whether Christ was baptized, no matter in what mode, *as an example* for his followers.

That Christ did *somethings* here on the earth, in which his followers should not *attempt* to imitate him, will be denied by no one. He was circumcised, fasted forty days in the wilderness, rode upon an ass into Jerusalem, attended upon the service of the synagogue and temple, wrought diverse miracles, and at last died upon the cross to make an atonement for sin, ineach of which acts, our brethren themselves being judges, it would be impiety in his followers to attempt to follow him. If the fact be conceded that Christ did *some things* in which we are not to imitate him, it may not be a self evident truth that we are to imitate him in *his baptism.*

The following reasons convince me of the perfect absurdity of the opinion that Christ was baptized, no matter in what mode, *as an example*, for his followers.

1. His age at the time of his baptism. He was then about 30 years old, and of course, had been capable of knowing the nature and design of baptism more than twenty years. His baptism, therefore, considered as an example, must conclude against every instance of baptism, administered before the subject is thirty years old, as really as against infant baptism.

2. He was one of the last whom John baptized. Saith St. Luke; *now when all the people were baptized, it came*

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to pass that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened. (Chapter 3, 21.) If he were baptized to set his followers an *example*, it is no more than reasonable to suppose that he would have been baptized first; because all baptized before him, could not have been baptized in obedience to his example.

3. He was not baptized on a profession of faith and repentance, nor for one of the reasons any where given in the New Testament why his followers should be baptized.

His baptism, however, taken as an example in this particular, would completely remove the objection of the Baptists against the baptism of infants, founded on their want of repentance and faith and a profession of religion.

4. His baptism could not have been an initiation *into*, or a confirmation *in*, any church. Of the Abrahamic church he was born a member, and was soon afterwards confirmed as such, in the reception of circumcision. If John, on his entrance upon his ministry, destroyed this church, and set up one entirely new, as some Baptists have supposed, then it will follow that for the period of between one and two years, Christ was a member of no church. And as it is certain that he did not become one of John's disciples in receiving baptism at his hands, he must have continued still in this disconsolate situation.

5. The baptism which he received was not administered in the name of the Trinity. But the Baptism which he *instituted*, is to be administered in the name of the *Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.* Consequently "to be baptized in imitation of his supposed example," we must violate *his own command.* Those, therefore, who are urging persons to be baptized in imitation of the supposed baptismal example of Christ,

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are only urging them to act in hostility to his own institution.

6. Many who were baptized by the same administrator were afterwards baptized by the Apostles. Acts 19, 1. 5.

7. John has informed us that the design of his baptism was to *manifest* Christ to Israel. *That he should be made manifest to Israel,* said he, *therefore am I come baptizing with water.* John 1, 31. These words plainly intimate that the baptism which John administered to Christ, was an "inauguratory service." This service answered to the ceremony practised under the law, in instating the prophets, priests and kings, in their offices. It is well known that the priests under the law, did not enter on the public service of God, till they had arrived at the age of thirty years; when they were consecrated to their office by "washing with water and anointing with oil."* Accordingly Christ, "when he began to be about thirty years of age;" knowing that it became him to fulfil all righteousness, was publicly inaugurated to his ministry by baptism, and the anointing of the Holy Ghost; on which occasion he was divinely declared to be the *Son of God* and all were commanded to hear him.† At this juncture commenced his public ministry. Accordingly Peter, speaking of the revelation which God sent to Israel by Christ, says Acts 10, 37. 38. "That word ye know, which was published throughout all Judea, and began from Galilee, *after the baptism which John preached;* how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost, and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed with the devil; for God was with him."

* Ex. 29, 4. Ch. 30, 19. Lev. 8, 12. Num. 8. 7 †Is. 61, 1.

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Had the chief priests & elders understood the grand design of John's baptism, never would they have inquired of Christ by what authority he taught and wrought miracles in the temple. Mat. 21, 23. And it is worthy of particular attention that when these impious characters, proudly supposing themselves the only sources of ecclesiastical authority, came to him in a body, and insolently demanded of him his "credentials" for doing these things, he only called their attention to the divine authority of John's baptism. *I also*, said he, *will ask you one thing which, if ye tell me, I in likewise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John*, WHENCE WAS IT? FROM HEAVEN, OR OF MEN? ? When they had acknowledged their incompetency to answer this inquiry, Christ replied, *Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.* Mat. 21. 25, 27.

The miracles which Christ wrought were the highest possible evidence of the divinity of his mission.—But his entering on his public office was *prior* to his *working* miracles, and therefore the *latter* could be no credentials for the former. What a person does in the execution of an office, cannot be considered as his credentials for entering that office. The sovereign authority of God himself appointed Christ to the offices of the prophet, the priest and the king of the church, and this appointment was *declared* or made *manifest* in his baptism. Consequently John says, *That he should be made manifest to Israel*, therefore, *am I come baptizing with water.*

As, therefore, the baptism which Christ received, was the divinely appointed means of *discovering* him to Israel, or to the church of God, in those offices which he afterwards visibly sustained, it is difficult to con-

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ceive any thing more absurd than to urge sinful men, under any pretence whatever, to imitate him in his baptism. It would be no more absurd to urge them to imitate him in his circumcision, in his keeping the passover, or in his obedience to any part of the Mosaic ritual.

For these reasons as well as some others which it is not necessary here to mention, I cannot as a christian, or as an honest man, urge a fellow creature to be *baptized*, nor consent to *baptize* him, under the idea of *imitating Christ in his baptism*. The baptism in which mankind are concerned is the one which Christ instituted, not the one which he received.

Our brethren still urge another objection against infant baptism. It is the difficulty of understanding it. Say they, "the study of it is the most perplexing study in the world, but in the study of believer's baptism every thing is plain and easy." They represent us as maintaining our practice by "a long string of texts from the old testament and the New, none of which mention the thing, or have any reference to it." *

This mode of reasoning is neither novel, nor unusual, and, if allowed to be conclusive, will prove any thing to be true that is clearly understood, or any thing to be false which we *cannot*, or which we *will not* see.

It is often less difficult to understand a sentiment than to reconcile it with scripture. When Quakers inform us that water baptism should not be practised, we know what they mean, but find ourselves wholly unable to reconcile it with scripture. When Pelagians, Arminians, Unitarians, and Universalists state their peculiar sentiments, we may clearly understand them and yet be perfectly unable to reconcile what we understand with the instructions of God's word.

* See History of the Baptists, Vol. 1 p. p. 91

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So far as Baptists and ourselves are agreed, so far we enjoy the same ease & endure the same labor in maining our sentiments. As we believe equally with them that adults should be baptized only on a profession of faith, it is not till we pass beyond this point that we differ. What *we* attempt to establish beyond this point, *they* attempt to destroy. What *we* attempt to *build*, *they* attempt to *tear down*. The only question to be decided, therefore, is this: Do Pœdo-baptists, in their attempts to rear up their edifice, labor more arduously than do Baptists in their attempts to tear it down? This question should be decided solely in respect to those who attempt to build on the one hand, and to demolish on the other, *by argument*. The mere dealers in *burlesque*, whether low or refined, should be noticed on neither hand.

If the representations of Baptists be correct, we have an extremely difficult task not only in erecting our edifice, but also in keeping it in repair. It is, according to their representations, in a tremulous attitude, and its pillars sometimes so shake when Baptists do no more than *quietly* walk by, that all our strength is called into exercise to prevent its actually falling. An edifice in such an attitude and of so feeble a structure, it is natural to suppose, would certainly fall under a very trifling blast from its enemeis' camp. But how is the fact? We must judge of the supposed strength of a foe, from the *preparations* made, and the *efforts* put forth to crush him. Well, what are the preparations made and the efforts actually put forth by the Baptists, to demolish our system? Trembling as is its posture and weak as is its frame, they have nevertheless such honorable conceptions of its strength, that they despair of its falling, unless its foundations be torn away. Therefore they first set themselves to this work.

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And how, let us inquire, do they, in their own view, accomplish it? By declaring that the ancient Zion of the Almighty was partly a political constitution, that the covenant according to which it was formed was a mere temporary covenant, or a covenant of works; that its members were generally hypocrites, that the law which they were under, required no more than external obedience, that the ordinances which it appointed were "pretty well adapted to please the carnally minded," that God, as its Legislator and Head, acted only in the capacity of a Temporal Governor, or political monarch. and that circumcision, the rite administered to its infants, was merely a sign of carnal descent, a mark of national distinction, and a token of interest in temporal blessings. Having thus as they suppose, torn away the foundations, they proceed to attack the superstructure itself. And with what weapon? I answer, a weapon that cannot destroy this system without at the same time destroying, as has already been shown, all the positive institutions of the Gospel.

It cannot be supposed that Baptists have been prodigal of their labor. They have doubtless done no more than they saw absolutely necessary to do, to disprove our sentiments, and force the scriptures to harmonize with their own.

But to maintain our theory, we never have found it necessary to make such efforts, or to employ such violence. We can suffer the Ancient Zion of God to stand on that foundation on which He established it, and to be connected with all those privileges and promises which he granted unto it, and, so far from likening God to a temporal ruler, or a political monarch in his relation to that body, we can behold him existing and acting therein, *as a prayer-hearing, covenant-keeping, infinitely gracious, holy* and *righteous* GOD; Yea,

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we can view the constitution, laws, and ordinances of that church as honorable to the WISDOM and HOLINESS that appointed them and as directly calculated to promote the temporal and immortal welfare of all its members, and yet find our theory, so far from being weakened, actually strengthened.

There is indeed greater difficulty in understanding the Pœdo-baptist, than the Baptist system, and the reason is, there is more in it to understand. It is more difficult to understand two ideas than one. The Pœdo-baptist system embraces the whole scheme of divine revelation, keeps steadily in view the analogy of all former economies of religion, and, considering the church as ONE VISIBLE CATHOLIC SOCIETY in which are deposited the oracles and the instituted ordinances of Jehovah, observes its march from one condition and dispensation to another, from its first *visible organization* down to the present time.

It is a feeble objection against any system or doctrine that it is difficult to be understood. Mysteries there are in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, but so far from objecting against this gospel on the ground of these mysteries, the holy angels desire to look into them. 1 Pet. 1, 12.

And it is firmly believed that were our brethren to look into the *mysteries* of Pœdo-baptism with the temper, in the exercise of which angels look into the mysteries of Redemption, they would find less to perplex them than they now imagine, especially in reconcileing the system with the holy scriptures. An unwillingness that a sentiment *should be true*, is an almost insuperable barrier to a discovery of its truth. Those who *cannot* see are not so blind as those who *will not!*

Controversy has given rise to the leading difficulties which attend the investigation of almost every

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controverted point. This evil, while it often embarrasses whatever properly belong to a subject, not unfrequently connects with it a vast assemblage of irrelevant matter. Had there never been any Socinians, Arminians, or Anti-Pœdo-Baptists, Trinitarian, Calvinistic or Pœdo-Baptist sentiments would never have been considered as especially difficult or perplexing.

Having noticed these objections against infant baptism, let us now proceed to notice the direct arguments in support of the practice.

If it can be shown that the Apostles practised this rite, all doubts respecting the Divinity of its origin will vanish.

That the Apostles did practise this rite, I shall now endeavor to prove:

I. From certain instances of their own conduct recorded in the New Testament:

II. From the views given in scripture of the church of God:

III. From the sameness of the import of circumcision and baptism:

IV. From the silence of the Jews in respect to the conduct of the Apostles towards their children:

V. From the manner in which the Apostles spake of the children of Believers:

VI. From the history of the church during the first centuries after the christian era.

I. That the Apostles practised the rite of Infant Baptism appears probable from certain instances of their own conduct recorded in the New Testament.

One instance is recorded in the connection containing the text.

"And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down and spake unto the women which resor-

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ted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of Purple of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us, whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul And when *she* was baptized and her *household*, she besought us saying, if ye have judged *me* to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there." Acts 16, 13. 15.

On the face of this narative it appears, that during the preaching of the Apostles, none but women were present, that of these women Lydia was the only one whose heart was opened properly to attend to the things spoken by Paul, and who was baptized, and lastly that her household were baptized, not in consequence of a profession of faith on their own part, but in consequence of her profession. Had this household been believers, and baptized on a profession of their own, Lydia, when inviting the Apostles into her house, would not have said, *if ye have judged* ME, *but if ye have judged* US *to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there.*

Here, if I am not mistaken, we have an indubitable instance of Apostolical practice, which, as to principle, exactly corresponds with what occurs in Pœdo-baptist churches whenever a parent is admitted on a profession of faith and the children under his or her care baptized on his or her account.

It is a question of no importance whether there were, or were not actually infants in this household. The household being baptized on account of their parent or mistress, whether it consisted of infants, or of persons advanced from infancy, clearly exhibits the principle for which we plead, and according to which we design to act in baptizing the infants of professing parents.

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This narrative has ever been a perplexity to our brethren. Convinced themselves, as they also strive to convince others, that none but professed believers should be baptized, they no sooner turn their eye upon this passage than they behold a *record*, from under the hand of inspiration, that is directly opposed to them.—But, unwilling to renounce a system which is so purely the offspring of their own ingenuity, they summons all their powers to invent an interpretation of this narrative that shall divest it of its apparent hostility to their views. After informing us that this woman had no children, or, if she had, that they were left in Thyatira, she, at that time, being on a peddling route, (charmingly equipped, indeed, for a pedler with a house and a household) after, in fine, informing us that she had no household, or that the other women mentioned or perhaps servants composed it, they at length reach the conclusion that none were baptized on this occasion but professed believers. But after all, so stubborn and unyielding is truth, this instance of Apostolic conduct is decidedly against them. It is full proof of the sentiments which they deny and labor to destroy.

Another instance as decidedly in our favor is recorded in the same chapter. It is the baptism of the Jailor and ALL HIS. The circumstances are thus related.

"Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out and said, sirs, what must I do to be saved. And they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house." And they spake unto him the word of the Lord and to all them that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes, and was baptized HE AND ALL HIS, STRAIGHTWAY. And

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when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house."

From this narrative it appears that more heard the word than the Jailor and his household. Doubtless there were domestics present, and, on so extraordinary an occasion, it is reasonable to suppose that some spectators were collected.

Of all that heard the word, the Jailor appears to be the only one *awakened* or brought to inquire what he must do to be saved. Not a single circumstance is here related that in the smallest degree favors the idea that any became believers but himself.

In the reply of the Apostles to his inquiry relative to his own *personal* salvation, they appear to have spoken the language of the former dispensation. *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ*, said they, *and thou shalt be saved and thy house.* Here we perceive that his own salvation and that of his household were, in some sense, promised on the sole condition of his own faith. We are not to suppose any thing peculiar in this case.—There was no other connection between the Jailor's faith and the salvation of his household, than subsists between the faith of any parent and the salvation of his offspring. The preachers of the Gospel may now utter the same language to all inquiring parents.

This passage is exactly parallel with many others in scripture. Gen. 17. 7. "*And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy seed after thee, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee & thy seed after thee.*" Gen. 18. 19. "*For I know him that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord to do*

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justice and judgment." Jer. 32. 29. *And I will give them one heart and one way, that they may fear me forever, for the good of them, and their children after them.*"— When Zacheus had embraced the faith of his father Abraham, Christ said unto him, Luke 19, 9. "*This day is salvation come to* THIS HOUSE, *for as much as he also is the son of Abraham.*"

The only scriptural interpretation of these and similar passages is, "That the faith of parents is of some peculiar spiritual advantage to their children and households, especially in that the parent, becoming therein a partaker of Abraham's faith, and consequently a true son of Abraham, becomes interested himself and his offspring with him, in the privileges and promises made to that Patriarch and his seed. In this sense his seed may be said to be saved.

Agreeably, therefore, to the import of these and similar passages of scripture, as also with what the Apostles themselves had declared to the Jailor, they not only baptized him on his profession of faith, but all that were his, i. e. such as were at his disposal, under his government, subject to his command.

Some, however, have supposed that all baptized on this occasion were believers. Their proof is derived from the last clause in the narrative. *And he rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.*

As this clause is considered by the opposers of infant baptism as conclusive evidence that none but professed believers were on this occasion baptized, we will briefly examine it.

In all the cases, recorded in scripture, where persons were baptized on a profession of faith, their faith is first mentioned, either expressly, or by implication.— They are first mentioned, either expressly or by implication, as having believed and then as being bapti-

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zed. But in this case, allowing that the passage cited proves that for which it is claimed, the mention of faith is subsepuent to the mention of baptism.

But what decides the case against our Brethren is, the original word here translated, *with all his house*, is not the same word, neither the same part of speech with that translated *house* in this very verse, nor with the one translated house in the 31st and 32d verses.— It is neither the word translated a *house* to denote a building, nor the one thus translated to denote a family; but it is an adverb of *place*, and it no more expresses an individual, or individuals in the Jailor's family, than it expresses the cattle in the field, the fish in the sea, or the fowls in the air.

Besides, the term believing, exclusively respects and exclusively agrees with the Jailor. The whole passage rendered in the plainest manner, reads thus: "And when he had brought them into his house, he sat meat before them, and *rejoiced in every part of his house*, having believed in God." Dr. Scott, whose commentary is in general use and deservedly in high reputation in this region, translates the passage thus. *He rejoiced through all his house, or in all his house, having believed in God.* "The word for *believed*, saith he, is singular, and the word for *with all his house*, is an adverb, so that the passage contains no proof that every one of the family believed." Other learned and pious writers have translated the passage in a similar manner.

In Acts 18. 8, where the faith not only of a householder but also of his household, is evidently intended to be expressed, the word, translated "house," is not only *another* word, but also *another part of speech*, from the one thus translated in the passage now under consideration. *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the syna-*

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gogue believed on the Lord WITH ALL HIS HOUSE: Gr. *sun oloo too oikoo autou.* For these four Greek words, there is nothing in Acts 16, 34, but the adverb *panoiki* a part of speech never used with respect to persons. The same inspired penman wrote both these passages. If in each he intended to express the *same idea*, as Baptists suppose, why did he not use the same language? An *adverb* cannot convey the meaning of a *preposition*, an *adjective*, *a substantive*, *and a pronoun*, *united.*

The passage Acts 16. 34, is fully guarded, in its phraseology, against the interpretation which our brethren put upon it. It clearly expresses the sense in which we have understood it, and, by no lawful means, can it be made to express more.

On these two instances of house-hold baptism, a distinguished divine,* some of whose writings, the Baptists have endeavored to employ to their own advantage, makes the following judicious observations, which, for the benefit of the reader, I will transcribe at large.

First. "If these families actually believed and were baptized on their own account, then there was as much reason, at least, for relating *their* faith, as relating the faith of Lydia and of the Jailor. Nay.

Secondly. There was a great deal more reason for relating the faith of these families, than the faith of the heads of them. For, if each of these families were converted *at once*, it was a remarkable display of divine Grace. No other instances of the same kind can be found in the Bible. We there find many instances of pious parents having very wicked and rebellious children; but we find not a single instance of a pious parent's having his whole family converted *at once.*——

* Dr. Emmons.

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Such instances of the conversion of households are contrary to God's usual dispensations of grace. It has always been his common method to take one and to leave another, to take one of a family, and two of a city and to lead them to Zion. If the whole, in each of these families, therefore, had been converted *at once*, their conversion would have been worthy of transmission to all future ages.

Their *faith* would have been far more remarkable than their *baptism*. But the inspired historian has related their *baptism*, without the least intimation of their *faith*, which is a strong presumptive evidence that they were not believers. This leads me to add.

Thirdly. That their baptism is related, in just such a manner, as we might have expected, had they not been believers. If only Lydia believed, and her household were baptized on her account, then it was proper to mention *her* faith, and say nothing more about her household, than barely that they were *baptized*.— And if only the Jailor believed, then it was proper to mention *his* faith, and simply mention the baptism of his family. This is just such an account as we might have expected in the case of infant baptism.

Should a Missionary among the natives of this country, give us an account of his baptizing believers and their children, he would naturally say, that he baptized such a man and his household, and such an one and all his. He would not think it necessary to call the children or the servants by name, nor to say any thing about their believing, or not believing. But were he to give an account of the baptism of a whole family, who were all converted at once, he would think it very proper to mention their conversion before their baptism; or at least, he would think it very improper to mention their *baptism* & wholly omit the account of their

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conversion, which was far more remarkable & interesting. If the inspired writer had told us, that Lydia and all her household were *converted*, we might have justly inferred from it that they were all *baptized*, or, if he had told us that the Jailor and all his were *believers*, we might have justly concluded that they were all admitted to baptism. But we have no right, on the contrary, to infer that these families were all believers, merely because the inspired writer has told us that they were all baptized. Indeed, there is not the least positive evidence in favor of the faith of these families, but the highest probability or moral certainty that they were *not believers*. And if they were not believers, then it is certain that they were not baptized on their *own* account, but on account of their *parents*, or of those who had the care of their education. Whether there were any infants in these families, is a question foreign from our present argument, which wholly turns upon the representation of *some* being baptized on the account of others. If the Jailor's and Lydia's households were *servants*, and baptized on their master's or mistress's account, this is a sufficient evidence, that the Apostles baptized the *infants* of *believing* parents. If these instances of household baptism be fully and fairly considered, they must appear to be as plain examples of infant baptism, as it is reasonable to suppose, the Apostles would have left us, in case they had made it their universal practice, to baptize the infant seed of believers."

There is yet another instance of household baptism, which I will just mention, not so much to defend the cause which I now have in hand, as to prevent a mistake which some, through inattention, and others thro' inclination, have made. Paul informs us, 1 Cor. 1, 16, that he baptized the household of Stephanas. Some

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have supposed that this person was the Jailor whose baptism we have just considered. That this is a mistake appears from the different places in which these persons were baptized, Stephanas, as is evident from 1 Cor. 16. 15, was an inhabitant of Achaia. The Jailor, as is evident from the 16th chapter of Acts, dwelt at Phillippi in Macedonia. These places were not only a great distance asunder, but were separated by branches of the Ægean and Mediterranean seas.

It has been supposed not only by Baptists, but also by some respectable Pœdo-baptists that this house consisted of Adults at the time of its baptism. The opinion has been founded on those words of the Apostle, 1 Cor. 16. 15, *They have addicted themselves to the ministry of the Saints.* But it should be remembered that the same Apostle has declared that this *house was the first fruits of Achaia*: they were the first baptized in all that region of country of which Corinth was the capital.

Their baptism, therefore, must have been administered more than twenty years when the Apostle wrote his first Epistle to the Corinthians, which was not until the year 56. If, therefore, they were all adults when baptized, some of them at this period must have been thirty-five or forty years of age, and the father, who, as appears from 1 Cor. 16. 17, was at this time with the Apostle, must have been far advanced in life.—Rarely indeed do whole families live together as *one household* twenty years after the youngest has arrived at adult age.

The supposition before us, therefore, as also the objection against infant baptism founded upon it, are alike without foundation. This case properly considered turns to the account of the very cause which it has often been cited to disprove. Allowing that the

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members of this household were baptized in infancy, or childhood, immediately after their parents became acquainted with christianity, in the period of twenty years, under the nurture which christian parents then bestowed upon their children, they had sufficient opportunity to become themselves believers, and *to addict themselves to the ministry of the Saints.*

The evidence, furnished by these three instances of Apostolic conduct, in favor of infant baptism, appears *more decisive* when it is remembered, that we have no account of the Apostles baptizing *parents*, or *heads* of families, and refusing, or omitting to baptize the children or servants on account of their unbelief.—— There is no reason to believe that any of those mentioned in the Acts, as baptized on their own account were heads of families, or if they were, that they had their families with them at the time. Doubtless many baptized on the day of Penticost were parents, but collected as they were on that extraordinary occasion from various and remote parts, without any thought of being baptized or embracing christianity, it is not reasonable to suppose that one of them had his household with him. In the cases of the Eunuch, of Saul and Cornelius there were no families. And it is a fact which no opposer of infant baptism can deny that wherever we read of the Apostles baptizing *a master* or a *mistress of a family*, there we are informed that they baptized the *household.*

II. That infant baptism is of Apostolic origin, appears from the views expressed in scripture of the church of God.

The opposers of infant baptism, suppose that under what is generally termed the christian dispensation, a church entirely new was set up and organized upon the earth. Indeed many of them suppose that no

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church properly existed before. As to the particular time when this church began to be erected, they are not agreed, some supposing that it was in the ministry of John, others in the ministry of Christ, and others on the day of Pentecost. Of this church they maintain that professed and baptized believers, are exclusively the members. The door of admission is baptism by immersion on a profession of faith.

From a church thus constituted, and thus disconnected from every thing that existed before it, or that exists around it, they proceed to argue against the baptism of the mere children of believers.

These being the views of the church entertained by our brethren, let us pass to those expressed upon the same subject in the scriptures.

1. The scriptures manifestly teach us, that a church existed antecedently to the ministry of the Apostles, or the ministry of Christ, or the ministry of John. Referring to Moses at the head of the children of Israel in the wilderness, Stephen said, Acts 7. 38, "*This is he that was in the church in the wilderness.*" What church was this? It was no other than the church formed in the family of Abraham, according to that covenant of which circumcision was the token. Though this body is no where called a church in the Old Testament, yet appellations of the same import are abundantly given to it. It is there termed "the *congregation, the people and the called of the Lord; disciples, the elect, the heritage, the Israel and Zion of God.*" Indeed every appellation is given to it, that is needful to distinguish it from mere worldly or political communities. Ex. 19. 5, 6: Lev. 26. 11, 12; Num. 16. 3: Ch. 27 15-23: Deut. 14, 1: Isa. 54, 5: Jer. 3, 14: Ch. 12, 7: and Ch. 23. 1-4.

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2. Of this church the infant seed both male and female, of all belonging to it, were members, and were sealed or ratified as such, the males really, the females virtually, in the reception of the token of the covenant according to which this church was formed.

The more intelligent Baptists do not deny that the infants of all belonging to this church, were born members of it, and though they deny the analogy which Pœdo-baptists suppose, between circumcision and baptism, on the ground that the former was administered only to males, yet they cannot deny that females enjoyed all the privileges of real members, and, by consequence, that they were considered and treated as though the token of the covenant had actually been administered to them. Compare Exodus 12. 48 with Exodus 12. 3, 4; see Judges 14. 3; Gal. 7. 7, 8, 9; Rom. 3. 29, 30. A moment's attention to these and similar passages, will convince every candid mind that *females* equally with males were included in the ancient circumcision, and entitled to the privileges of which circumcision was the token. Peter, as the Apostle of the circumcision, preached the Gospel as really to Jewish women as to Jewish men. In Rom. 3. 29, 30, *circumcision* does not mean males and *uncircumcision* females, but circumcision evidently means Jews, both males and females, and *uncircumcision* means Gentiles, both males and females.

3. To this church, in which the membership of infants was divinely appointed, promises were abundantly made, which in their accomplishment, secured its continuance to the end of time and its final extension over all the earth.

That this church continued to the ministry of John is admitted on all hands. And that it passed on beyond that period, that it exists still, and that it will

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continue to exist even to the end of the world, will appear from a consideration of a few of the many promises which were anciently made to it.

More than seven hundred years before the ministry of John, it was divinely promised to this church that great accessions to its numbers should be made from Gentile nations. See Isaiah 49, 18. "Lift up thine eyes round about and behold: all these gather themselves together and come to THEE: As I live saith the Lord, THOU shalt surely clothe thee with them all, as with an ornament and bind them on THEE as a bride doth." Again verses 22, 23, "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles and set up my standard to the people, and they shall bring THY sons in their arms, and THY daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders. And kings shall be THY nursing fathers, and their queens THY nursing mothers." And again Isaiah 60, verses 3, 4. "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about and see, all they gather themselves together, they come to THEE: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side." Verse 12.—"The nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted."—Verse 14. "The sons of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee, and all they that despised thee, shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet, and they shall call thee the *city of the Lord, the Zion of the Holy One of Israel.*" Verses 15, 16.—"Whereas thou hast been forsaken and hated, so that no man went through thee, *I will make thee an eternal excellency, a joy of many generations.* Thou shalt also suck the milk of the Gentiles, and shalt suck the breast

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of kings, and *thou shalt know that I the Lord am thy Saviour and thy Redeemer, the mighty one of Jacob*".

Promises of this description abound in the prophetical writings of the Old Testament. They were all made to the church then in existence, and consequently, if there be truth in the Almighty, the continuance of this church to the end of time, and its ultimate extension over the whole earth are infallibly secured.

4. The continuance of the church, formed according to the Abrahamic covenant, after the introduction of the christian dispensation, appears to be supposed in those prophecies of the Old Testament, which respect the *excision* of the unbelieving Jews from among the people of God.

Of the numerous prophecies relating to this event, we will briefly notice one; the one quoted by Peter; Acts 3. 22. 23. "*For Moses truly said unto the Fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you, of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that Prophet, shall* BE DESTROYED FROM AMONG THE PEOPLE."

From among what people were the Jews who rejected the Messiah destroyed? Not from among the ELECT unto eternal life. For they never belonged to this body. His people whom *He foreknew*, God never casts away. Nor were they destroyed from the great body of the Jewish nation; for this body were the very persons cut off. The only people from among whom they could have been destroyed, were those who retained their standing in the church of God, and who were owned by him as his visible, covenant people.—And in what sense were they destroyed from among this people? We answer, by being *excluded from their church state*, from the privileges and blessings which,

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as the people of God, they had once themselves enjoyed, and which this people were still to enjoy.

The destruction of these unbelievers from this church of God, respected not only themselves but their infant seed also, as is evident from fact. Here the question arises, did the same calamity befall *the infant seed of those who retained* their standing in this church? If so, as the Baptists contend, then the children of those who embraced the Messiah, were exposed to the same calamity which befell the offspring of those who rejected him!! The same curse from the Almighty, so far as descendants were concerned, accompanied the faith of the one, that actually attended the *unbelief* of the other. Upon Baptist principles, there is no avoiding this result. That the children of those who received Christ and also the children of those who rejected him, were in covenant, or within the pale of the visible church, until the time arrived in which the judgment, threatened in the words before us, took effect, must be admitted by Baptists themselves. If, therefore, none but unbelievers and their seed were destroyed from among the people of God, during this season, it must inevitably follow that those parents who retained their standing, by visibly adhering to Christ, retained the standing of their children also, and, as a consequence, the church of God, at the commencement of the christian dispensation, embraced not only professed believers but also their infant seed. (Compare with the above explanation Mal. 3, 1-6, particularly the fourth verse.)

5. In the New Testament, no declarations are made or facts recorded, that in any way imply the abolition of the Abrahamic church, under the christian dispensation, but every thing is of a contrary aspect. John, entering upon his ministry, exclaimed, "*The Kingdom of Heaven*, or the gospel dispensation, (not the aboli-

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tion of the ancient church, or the establishment of a new one) *is at hand.*" Christ, entering upon his ministry, made a similar exclamation. If Christ, in his ministry, established a church entirely distinct from the church which antecedently existed, he must have acted in hostility to that very law under which he was made, and which it was absolutely necessary that he should fulfil in order that his followers might be redeemed from its curse, and receive the adoption of sons. Gal. 4. 4, 5. When he came to John for baptism, he said "it becomes us to fulfil all righteousness," that is, *to obey the requirements of the ceremonial law*, a law then in force and appointed to regulate the worship of the then existing Abrahamic church. If Christ with his immediate followers, composed a church, distinct from and in opposition to, the then existing Abrahamic church, why did he command his followers to render obedience to the constituted authorities of that church? See Mat. 23, 1, 2, 3. "Then spake Jesus to the multitude, and to his disciples, saying, The scribes and Pharisees *sit in Moses' seat.* All therefore which they bid you observe, that observe and do: but do ye not after their works, for they say and do not!" If Christ, during his ministry, established an entirely new church, why did he himself, even to the night in which he was betrayed, attend to the religious services of the Abrahamic church?

Christ, in his advent, is represented as having *come to his own*, i. e. to his own visible kingdom, and in his personal ministry, to have been a *minister of the circumcision for the truth of God*, not to demolish an old church or to erect a new one, *but to confirm the promises made unto the Fathers.* John 1. 11: Rom. 15. 8: and Luke 1. 67-75.

Speaking to the unbelieving Jews, on a certain occa-

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sion, he said, *The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.* Mat. 21, 43. Whoever will carefully attend to the connection in which these words are found, must be convinced that, by the "kingdom of God," in this place the Saviour meant that church state, together with its privileges, which the Jews for ages past had enjoyed. This kingdom, on account of their unbelief, was to be taken from them and given to the believing Gentiles; that is, unbelieving Jews were to be separated from this kingdom, and it was to be set up among the Gentiles. No new kingdom, or church is here intimated. The very kingdom taken from the Jews, was the one, the very one, transferred to the Gentiles.

That the church, under the Gospel dispensation, is the Abrahamic Church continued, is evident from many other passages in the New Testament. See Rom. 11. 1, 2, 17, 18, 19, 20, 24. "I say then hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham. God hath not cast away his people which He foreknew. If some of the branches be broken off, and thou being a wild olive tree wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; boast not against the branches; but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then the branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith.

Be not high minded but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee. Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God, on them which fell severity; but toward thee goodness, if thou continue in his goodness, otherwise thou shall be cut off."

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In this chapter, particularly in the passages cited, the Apostle evidently treats of the calling of the Gentiles, and the rejection of the Jews. The church from which the unbelieving Jews were rejected, as must be conceded on all hands, was the Abrahamic church.—Of no other church were they ever members. This church the Apostle, probably in imitation of the Prophet, Jer. 11, 16. sets forth under the emblem of an olive tree. Of this tree, the Jews, the descendants of Abraham, were the *natural* branches. They were made such by God himself. But though natural branches, they could not stand without faith. Unbelief was the sole reason of their being broken off. Diminutively as Baptists speak and write and think of this church, unbelief was inconsistent with the continuauce of membership in it. Contrary to their declarations, it had within itself the means of disciplining and ejecting the unbelieving and the disobedient.

Into the same olive tree from which the unbelieving Jews were broken off, were the believing Gentiles engrafted, and, as a consequence, partook, in common with the natural branches that retained their standing, *of the root and fatness of the olive tree.* Thus those who were once afar off, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and stangers from the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world, were bro't nigh, and became "fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God" and were builded upon the foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone, becoming fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of the same promise, and sharers in the same privileges, with *the* believing descendants of Abraham themselves. (Compare with this explanation, Rom. 15, 27.)

When the Jews, the natural, but, at present, the se-

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vered branches of this olive tree, shall be converted to the christian faith, and gathered from all their present dispersions back to their ancient inheritance, agreeably to the predictons of the prophets, they will only be engrafted into the same olive tree; or be made members of the same church, from which, for unbelief, their ancestors were cut off. *God*, saith the Apostle, *is able to graft them in again. For if thou*, a believing Gentile, *wert cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted, contrary to nature, into a good olive tree, how much more shall these which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree.*

Accrding to the views here given of the Abrahamic church, its existence has never been discontinued a moment. Though many of its natural branches were broken off, yet some remained. To these the first Gentile converts were added. Consequently the first Gentile converts were added to a church, in which the membership of infants was Divinely established.

The Baptists, aware, if by the *good olive tree* the Abrahamic church be meant, that their notions of an entirely new church under the christian dispensation must be erroneous, profess to understand by it the *Great Redeemer*.

If this interpretation be correct, then the unbelieving Jews were *once* in Christ, either by a living faith, or by a visible profession. To suppose the first, is only to suppose that they were once real believers. To suppose the second, is to suppose that they once professed faith in Christ. The latter, strange as it may appear, seems to be the opinion of a leading Baptist writer,* and a writer too who entirely discards the

*Dr. Baldwin, Appen. p. p. 240.

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idea of the existence of any properly organized church before the christian dispensation.† In answer to the question, "How can it be said that the unbelieving Jews were branches of this olive tree, considered as representing Christ;" he observes, "they were so considered, in consequence of their *visible profession*. As a nation they professed to be his people." If this gentleman's statement be correct and the Apostle's also, it will follow that these unbelieving Jews were naturally members, or branches of Christ, even until the period of their ejection, (which, according to an opinion of this writer expressed on a preceding page, was not till some time after the calling of the Gentiles,) BY A VISIBLE PROFESSION. According to these views, the only difference between believing Jews and unbelieving, after the manifestation of Christ to Israel in his baptism, was this, the one were *really*, the other only *professedly, his people*, or followers. Both were his *disciples*, or *people* by "visible profession." There was the same difference between them that there is now, in all Baptist & Pœdo-baptist churches, between those who are really Christ's friends, and those who are so only by outward profession.

If the declarations of this writer be correct, it must inevitably follow that the Abrahamic church, in every period of it, was visibly a church of Christ. Believers and unbelievers were by *visible profession* his people. This, as all must concede, is as much as can in truth be affirmed of any of the churches planted by the Apostles, or that have existed since. The Abrahamic church, therefore, was not so destitute, at least, of professions involving true religion, as Baptist writers in general, and this gentleman in particular, have repre-

† Letters p. 27.

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gented. Had they not applied the token of the covenant to infants, and acknowledged and treated them as members, they would have been what Baptist churches now claim to be, *all visibly* Christ's, that is, universally the people of Christ by "*visible profession.*"

Perfectly absurd as is the supposition that the Apostle, by the good olive tree, meant Christ, yet Baptists must suppose it, or admit that he meant by it the Abrahamic church state. If they admit the latter, they know that their scheme is gone forever. And how they save their scheme, by supposing the former, it is not easy to conceive. If these Jews who persecuted, reviled, crucified, and obstinately rejected Christ, were by visible profession his people, that whole nation, from the days of Abraham down to that time, had, by visible profession, been the same; for those amputated branches had made no other professions than had been common to the Abrahamic church for ages.

Of the many passages in point that remain, I shall notice but one, viz. WHAT Christ AFFIRMED respecting certain children or infants which were brought to him by believing parents for his blessing. See Mat. 19. 13, 14: Mark 10. 13, 14: Luke 18. 15, 16.

Respecting these children, Christ said, *of such is the kingdom of God.* And this fact he asserted *as the reason* why they should be *brought* to him.

If by the kingdom of God be here meant the visible church, according to the more usual meaning of the phrase in the New Testament, then Christ here asserts that the infants of believers are members of this kingdom, the members of his visible church. If by the phrase be understood the kingdom of Heaven, then Christ here asserts that such infants are members of this kingdom, and, if so, then they are proper sub-

825191

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jects to be members of his visible kingdom and to be treated as such.

"It cannot reasonably be said, says Dr. Lathrop, that the words, *of such*, intend only persons of a *child like* disposition: for then how would this be a reason why little children should be brought to Christ, and why he should be displeased with his disciples for endeavoring to hinder them? This makes our Lord's argument run thus: "suffer infants to be brought to me, for my kingdom consisteth *only* of adult persons resembling children in their disposition." He elsewhere makes *Lambs and Doves* emblems of a christian temper, and according to this interpretation he might as well have said, suffer Lambs and Doves to come to me for of SUCH is the kingdom of God, i. e. it consists of persons of a Lamb-like and Dove-like temper." In these words of Christ there is no mystery. The continuance of the church membership of infants, under the christian economy, is here plainly asserted, and on the ground of their membership, we are taught the propriety of their being visibly presented to Christ for his blessing.

The scriptural declarations and facts now exhibited, prove, as is believed, beyond all reasonable doubt, that the church of God under the christian dispensation is but a continuation of the church which God himself established in the family of Abraham, according to that covenant of which circumcision was a token.

From this fact, two important consequences must inevitably follow.

1. *The Abrahamic covenant is yet in force.*

2. *The infant seed of believers are now entitled to the token of that covenant.*

Let us for a moment attend to each of these consequences.

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1. *The Abrahamic covenant is yet in force.* If it be asked, how this appears; the answer is, from the fact that the church formed by it is yet in existence. The one cannot exist without the other, and the certain existence of the one proves the certain existence of the other.

But, say the Baptists, "The Abrahamic covenant is annulled, it has been superceded by a covenant entirely new and distinct." But where have we an account of this *new* and distinct covenant? They inform us in Jer. 31. 32-33, and Heb. 8. 8, 9, 10: "*Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah.*

We will for a moment admit that the covenant here referred to, is another and distinct covenant from the Abrahamic, and that the church now in existence stands, not on the Abrahamic, but on this new and entirely distinct covenant.

From these concessions several results inevitably follow.

1. The church now in existence has no interest in the promises made to the church founded according to the Abrahamic covenant. But we have shown that the promises made to this latter church, secured its continuance to the end of time and its final extension over the earth. With ultimate reference to that period, when the church of Christ was first established among the Gentiles, The Most High, by the mouth of his Prophet, said, Amos 9. 11, *In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old: That they may possess the remnant of Edom, and of all the heathen which are called by my name, saith the Lord that doeth this.* This prophecy the Apostle James, Acts 15. 16, 17, cites as being ful-

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filled in the conversion of the Gentiles. How the conversion of the Gentiles could be a re-building of the *tabernacle of David and the ruins thereof*, and at the same time the erection of a church distinct from the Abrahamic, it is utterly impossible to determine.*

2. If believers, under the christian dispensation belong to a church not founded upon the Abrahamic covenant, but upon a covenant entirely new and dis-

* This prophecy interprets the one, Dan. 2. 44, "*In the days of these kings shall the God of Heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people; but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms and it shall stand forever.*" What is here meant by *setting up a kingdom* is doubtless meant in the above passage, *by raising up the tabernacle of David that is fallen down, and setting it up, that the residue of men might seek after the Lord, and all the Gentiles upon whom the name of the Lord is called.* The kingdom set up in the fulfilment of this prophecy, was *the tabernacle of David*, the Abrahamic church, the church of God, the church of Christ; the *kingdom* which was taken from the unbelieving Jews and given to the believing Gentiles: Mat. 21. 43, the *tabernacle* which, according to Isa. 33. 20, was never to be taken down, not one of whose stakes should ever be moved, or cords broken.

Understood in this sense, this passage perfectly harmonizes with the great system of prophecy in the Old Testament, relating to the church under the christian dispensation, but, understood as Baptists are disposed to understand it, to carry their point against us, it is in complete contrariety to that system as well as to the general language of the New Testament.

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tinct, then believers at present stand in no covenant relation to Abraham, and have no covenant connection with him, more than with any other ancient believer. But this is entirely contrary to the most express declarations in the New Testament. It is there peremptorily declared that all who *are Christ's are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.* Gal. 3. 29.— If believers in Christ are heirs according to the promise made to Abraham, then the covenant containing that promise must now be in existence and in force.— If the covenant be dead, the promise must be dead also.

If the covenant made with Abraham were not to survive the Sinai covenant or the law of peculiarity, how totally without force & meaning were those words of John, Mat. 3. 9, to the Pharisees that gathered around him. These Pharisees, like the Baptists of the present day, supposed, that the Abrahamic covenant could continue no longer than his natural descendants continued the *peculiar* people of God. Influenced by this error, these Jews assembled around the Baptist. Knowing their mistake, he aimed to address them in a manner calculated to correct it. "*Think not to say within yourselves, we have Abraham to our father, for verily I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.*" In these words, the Baptist evidently asserted that others than the natural descendants of Abraham, might be raised up as his seed and be as really brought within the pale of his covenant as were any of his own offspring. If, however, the Abrahamic covenant was then annulled, or *about* to be annulled, it was then impossible, or was *soon* to be impossible, either to raise up, or continue children to Abraham.

3. God promised to make Abraham the father of many nations. Gen. 17. 4 : Rom. 4. 17, 18. But down to the commencement of the christian dispensa-

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tion, he had become the father of but one nation, i. e. but one nation had as yet been brought into such a covenant relation to him that he was their father. The calling of the Gentiles, therefore, or the bringing of them into a covenant relation to him, was absolutely necessary that this promise might be accomplished. But if this covenant were annulled at the commencement of the christian dispensation, this promise never has been, nor never will be, fulfilled.

4. It was foretold of Christ, *that the government should be upon his shoulder, and that of the increase of his government and peace there should be no end,* UPON THE THRONE OF DAVID, AND UPON HIS KINGDOM, TO ORDER IT AND TO ESTABLISH IT WITH JUDGMENT AND JUSTICE, FROM HENCEFORTH EVEN FOREVER: THAT THE THRONE OF HIS FATHER DAVID SHOULD BE GIVEN TO HIM, AND THAT HE SHOULD REIGN OVER THE HOUSE OF JACOB FOREVER. Isa. 9. 7. Luke 1. 32, 33.

Now, we ask, how is it possible that Christ can fulfil these prophecies, in acting as the head of a church, without any connection with the one of which David was a member, and in ruling a kingdom wholly disconnected from the one over which David presided? And in what sense, we would further inquire, can the throne of David, agreeably to Ps. 89. 4, 29, 36, be builded up to all generations, upon this hypothesis?

These predictions, as also those noticed in the preceding pages, together with many others that might be exhibited, present an embarrassment to the Baptist system too great to be removed by the mere supposition that the Abrahamic church was only a typical establishment. If this church was merely a typical church; we ask, *of what it was typical?* Was it a church organized upon Baptist principles? Certainly

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not. How could a church, embracing and treating infants as members, have been typical of *one* wholly discarding the membership of infants? How could a church, administering the token of the covenant not only to adult professors but also to their infant seed, have been typical of a church that limits that token entirely to adult professors?

5. The covenant, of which circumcision was the token, is expressly declared to be an everlasting covenant, a word commanded to a thousand generations. Gen. 17. 7: 1 Chron. 16. 15–17. If this covnant were annulled, at the commencement of the christian dispensation, it continued, as is evident from Mat. 1. 17, but forty two generations.

With what propriety an instrument, designed to continue a period not exceeding forty two generations, could at its formation be termed everlasting, and, after it had been in operation more than a third of that period, be still termed *a word commanded to a* THOUSAND GENERATIONS, it is no easy task to determine.

The scriptures assert, and Baptists admit, that believers, in every age and place, as really as his natural posterity, are Abraham's seed. So long, therefore, as there is a generation of true believers on earth, so long must the Abrahamic covenant be in existence and in force; for God promised Abraham to establish this very covenant *with his seed after him, in their generations, for an everlasting covenant.*

These are a few of the consequences following the supposition that the Abrahamic covenant has been disannulled and superseded.

The covenant, specified in the passages before us, was to supersede, not the Abrahamic but the Sinai covenant. *Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I*

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will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand, to bring them out of the land of Egypt. But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel, After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God and they shall be my people. The covenant, mentioned Heb. 8. 13, *as being old and decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away*, was not the Abrahamic, but the Sinai covenant. This latter covenant came into being more than four hundred years after the former. If, therefore, it did not destroy the former at its commencement, how can it be supposed to have done it at its termination! What a man in life and health cannot destroy, he cannot be supposed to destroy in his death.

The covenant, specified in the passages before us, so far from disannulling, implies and establishes the Abrahamic. It was Divinely promised, as must be evident to every one who will impartially examine it; *to the very church* formed and perpetuated under the Abrahamic covenant. What monstrous absurdity, therefore, is it to suppose that it was the design of this covenant to blot out the church to which it was promised, as also the covenant according to which this church was organized!

As to matter and substance, it is precisely the same with the Abrahamic. In the latter God said to Abraham, *I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee*, TO BE A GOD UNTO THEE AND THY SEED AFTER THEE, and afterwards to Israel in Egypt, I WILL TAKE YOU TO ME FOR A PEOPLE AND I WILL BE TO YOU A GOD: in the former he said to the house of Israel and to the house of Judah "as typical, and mystical-

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ly significant of the whole church of God," *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts,* AND I WILL BE THEIR GOD AND THEY SHALL BE MY PEOPLE. No blessing is clearly asserted in one which is not contained in the other. The great leading promise in both is the same. The promise of the Spirit was as really comprised in the latter as in the former. Accordingly, the Apostle says to believers, Gal. 3. 13, 14. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.*— Thus the covenant was made *by* the same Being, *with* the same church, and *contained* the same blessings as the Abrahamic. Why then was it called *new?* I answer,—It was so called with respect to the abolition of the old, or the Sinai covenant, and on account of the clearer exhibition of its blessings under the christian dispensation and its renewal in the ministry of John, of Christ and his Apostles, and full ratification in his death and resurrection, and on account of its subsequent union with the new institutions and laws, regulating the worship of God in the N. Testament. For these reasons this covenant may be termed *new*, and yet, in each of the particulars mentioned, be the same with the covenant established with Abraham, of which circumcision was the appointed token and seal. For reasons less obvious the great law of love, though it had existed from the beginning, was termed by an Apostle *a new commandment.* 1 John 1. 7, 8.

It should here be carefully remembered that God promised to make this covenant, not with individuals, but with the *house* of Israel and with the *house* of Judah. The term *house*, as used in scripture, never means certain individuals of a family, or of a tribe, or of a nation,

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but it comprehends the family, the tribe or the nation to which it relates. Num. 1. 18-45: Isa. 48. 8: Hos. 5. 1: Mic. 3. 1-9: Acts 10. 2: Ch. 16. 15, and Ch. 18. 8. Admitting, therefore, what Baptists so strenuously urge, that this is an entirely distinct covenant from the Abrahamic, we nevertheless cannot see in what way it supports either their theory or their practice.* The promise, *I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah*, cannot be understood in any lower sense than as comprising both pa-

* It is certainly worse than trifling to pretend that only the spiritual children of Abraham were respected in the covenant made with that Patriarch. The late Dr. Hemmenway gave the following plain and brief state of the case. "The covenant with Abraham contains a grant of external church privileges, and also of saving blessings, to his children and heirs, that is the church. The spiritual children of Abraham (if we may use the term of distinction) are the *invisible* church, who are in God's account heirs according to the promise to whom the special grace of the covenant is savingly applied. But as the spiritual seed are known only to God, and as it is the will of God to have a visible church, in which his ordinances should be outwardly administered by men, according to rules by him prescribed; so He has given direction, that all those who are visibly and in the account of the church, children and heirs of Abraham, or church members, should be admitted to the outward ordinances and privileges of God's covenant people. And God has plainly declared, that all the natural posterity of Abraham in their generations, were to be received as his heirs, members of the visible church, and in human acceptation interested in that covenant in which it was promised that He would BE A GOD TO HIM AND HIS SEED. All these I say, were visibly heirs of Abraham, until disinherited and cut off from his family by Divine direction. And not only the natural posterity, but all others who should desire to join with them in the faith and worship of the true God, were also to be respected and admitted as heirs of Abraham by adoption. And accordingly he became the adoptive father of many nations, besides his natural descendants. Now, as believers are the children and heirs of Abraham, as Paul says, and as the blessing of Abraham has come upon the Gentiles, their natural posterity must stand upon the same footing exactly with the children of the other heirs, and so are to be accounted and admitted as visible heirs of those privileges which were entailed upon the family of Abraham in their successive generations. See Isa. 49. 22: Jer. 30. 20.

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rents and children. Understood in this sense, it harmonizes with other promises anciently given to the church, which evidently respected the times of the christian dispensation, particularly the promise, Jer. 31. 1. "*At the same time* (the time specified Ch. 30. 9.) *saith the Lord, I will be the God of all the families of Israel, and they shall be my people.*" See Isa. 44. 3, 4; Ch. 59. 20, 21.

2. The church as also the covenant according to which it was organized continuing the *same*, under the christian, as under the preceding dispensation, it cannot but be inferred that the seed of believers are entitled to the token of that covenant now as they formerly were, whatever this token may now be.

For nineteen centuries preceding the christian dispensation, the seed of the members of the church, on the ground of membership, had received the token of the covenant. If the same practice was to be continued, under the christian dispensation, nothing was needful to be said respecting it; for the principle of infant membership was a principle which the change of dispensation did not touch. But if it was to be discontinued, a *warrant as express as the one which at first appointed it*, was necessary for its abrogation. No such warrant, and nothing resembling it, can any where be found in the New Testament.

"God, by instituting a church in the family of Abraham, says Dr Hopkins, set a pattern, and appointed a form of a church, in all the essentials of it, agreeable to his own wisdom and goodness, in which he included both parents and their children, and ordered the initiating seal of the covenant to be applied to infants; hereby declaring them to be the proper subjects of it. This was a great favor and privilege to parents and children; and was therefore strictly enjoin-

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eousness, wrought out by the Great Redeemer, in which by faith a believer becomes interested.

Of this righteousness is baptism a seal at the present time. As it is an outward sign of those internal effects of the spirit, in which the heart is renewed, and sanctified and the blood of Christ applied to the soul, whereby this righteousness is apprehended, and an interest in it obtained, it may be said to be a seal of this righteousness itself.

But here, it may be asked, is baptism the seal or token of the covenant according to which the visible church of God is organized? Though an affirmative answer to this inquiry be evidently implied in the three points of agreement already noticed, yet, for the satisfaction of some, further proof will be adduced.

That the covenant of which circumcision was anciently the token is now in existence and in operation as the covenant of the church, will now be considered as a point proved. The question to be answered is; Has baptism taken the place of circumcision as the token of this covenant? If it have not, this covenant, as must be admitted on all hands, is at present an unsealed covenant, and by consequence the church under it, is without any sensible pledge of the covenant relation of God to her.

Circumcision anciently was in itself no more than a visible mode or form of sealing to persons their interest, (an interest antecedently possessed) in the covenant of God. An abolition of this mode, or form, therefore, does not imply an abolition of the seal, or the blessing sealed. Baptism *may* seal whatever circumcision sealed. Nothing either in the nature or the relation of things renders it impossible. That it does this appears from the memorable words of Peter. Acts 2. 38, 39, *Repent and be baptized every one of you*

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in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is, unto you and your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.

The promise of which mention is here made agrees with the Abrahamic covenant. This covenant had, from the time it was first given down to the day of Pentecost, included the posterity of Abraham and their infant seed, and also as many of the Gentiles as were from time to time called into the church formed by it, together with *their* infant seed. Gentiles, in the language of the Jews, were said to be "*afar off*" aliens, strangers &c. Eph. 2. 12, 17. When any of these Gentiles, coming from "*afar*" upon the Divine call, to join themselves to the Lord and his people, were received into the church and covenant of God by circumcision, their children were received with them.

In Acts 3. 25. the Apostle, with a view to persuade the Jews to repentance and conversion, proposed for their encouragement the consideration, that "*They were the children of the covenant which God made with their fathers,*" &c. To declare the Jews the children of the covenant was the same thing as to declare that *the promise was unto them and their children.* And accordingly we find the Apostle used both declarations with a view to the same end, viz. to encourage the Jews to repentance.

The Abrahamic covenant is frequently, if not generally, in the New Testament, termed "THE PROMISE," See Rom. 4. 13, 14: Gal. 3. 17, 18 & Ch. 4. 28.

If, by this promise, be understood any promise, anciently made to the church, of the Spirit in his sanctifying influences, children will still be found to be included. See Deut. 30. 6: Isa. 44. 3, 4, & Ch. 59, 21. &c. And as the promise of the Spirit in these influences is contained in the Abrahamic covenant, (see page 107) even upon this supposition it will follow, that the Apostle in the mention of this promise, had sole reference to this covenant, which in itself must be full proof that this covenant is in existence and in force under the christian dispensation.

This fact must forever preclude the Baptist evasion, that this promise is restrained to those solely whom the Lord does call in a way of saving conversion. The Jews addressed in Acts, 2. 38, 39. and Ch. 3. 25. were THEN *children of the covenant, the promise was* THEN *to them and their children* and they were called to repentance and baptism in the name of Christ that they might retain their interest in that covenant or promise.

The Baptist interpretation of this promise makes the Apostle speak *absolute nonsense*, so far as the Jews were concerned, "The promise saith he, is to you and your children." But remember that neither,

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By the promise here mentioned, we can reasonably understand no other than the *great promise* in the Abrahamic covenant, Gen. 17. 7: TO BE A GOD UNTO THEE AND THY SEED AFTER THEE. As Jews the hearers of the Apostles could have understood no other, nor in any other sense as here exhibited, "than as asserting the joint interest of their infants with themselves, in the covenant of God, and consequently their right to the seal of that covenant." The promise of which the Apostle here speaks had for ages been a familiar theme with every Jew, and no one present on this occasion could possibly have apprehended it in the light in which the Baptists generally profess to understand it. And had he, he would have greatly misunderstood it; for the promise of the Spirit in his extraordinary influences, made by Christ to his Apostles before his ascension, Luke 24. 49: Acts 1. 5, 8: and fulfilled unto them on the day of Pentecost, and in which many others, in the primitive ages of christianity, were sharers, is not made to all who repent and believe and are baptized.

This promise is not the common legacy of all believers. It is not fulfilled to them now, nor will it ever be.

It will be admitted that the Apostle urges this pro-

you nor your children have at present any interest in it, and no mortal can tell whether either you or they ever will have. The promise is indeed to you and your children—but remember that neither you nor your children are entitled to any privilege by it more than belongs to any person or child on the face of the earth. The promise is indeed to you and your children—but to be plain, all that I mean by it is, the promise WILL belong to you and to your children, when both you and your children shall repent and become real christians!!" The restraining clause, "even as many as the Lord our God *shall* call," must have had reference, therefore, solely to those who were not then called within the church and covenant of God. To such and to such only can it have reference at the present time.

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mise as a reason why the persons whom he addressed should be baptized. "But how could this promise, being still assured to them and their children, be a reason for their baptism in the name of Jesus Christ, unless baptism were a seal of that same promise as exhibited in the new economy?" "Your circumcision sealed to you," says the Apostle, "your interest in the covenant with Abraham, as it was exhibited under the law; baptism seals your interest in that covenant, as it is exhibited in perfection under the Gospel. If you refuse the Lord Jesus, and the initiating ordinance of his dispensation, you refuse the better things which God has provided for you. If you yield up yourselves to the Lord Jesus Christ, you will have all that the promise contains in its application to this better state of things, sealed unto you, therefore repent and be baptized." In this view the argument is conclusive. In any other, it is of no force at all. What persuasion to baptism would there be in the consideration that the promise was to them and their children, if baptism had no relation to the promise? And what relation could it have unless as a seal, occupying the same place with regard to the promise under the new dispensation, which was occupied by circumcision under the old? Admitting this, every thing is clear Two initiatory rites of the same general import cannot exist together. The dispensation by Christ Jesus takes place of the dispensation of Abraham, with all the additions by Moses; the form of sealing the covenant under this takes place of the form of sealing it under those. The greater contains all that was contained in the less, and supersedes it. Baptism supplants circumcision.*

*Christian's Magazine, vol. 1 p. 392

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As Baptism is here connected with the same promise with which circumcision was formerly connected, it must have taken its place as the seal and token of that promise. And as all interested in this promise anciently received circumcision either really, or virtually, so all to whom this promise is now made should receive baptism. As this promise anciently embraced parents and their infant seed, so it embraces them now and, as a consequence, its present seal or token should be administered to both, to one as really as to the other, and for the same reason.

Aware of this substitution, the Apostles, if they acted agreeably to it, must on the reception of believing parents to the church, not only have baptized them, but their infant seed also. And accordingly we have seen that on the reception of Lydia, the Jailor and Stephanas to the church the Apostle not only baptized them but also their households.

On the ground that baptism has succeeded circumcision as the token of God's gracious covenant with his church, the declarations of the Apostle, Rom. 4. 11, 12, appear intelligible, and free from all tautology or inconsistency. In each of these verses the Apostle speaks of the circumcision of Abraham. In the first he represents Abraham as being circumcised, *that he might be the father of all them that believe*, though they be not circumcised, i. e. whether they be Jews or Gentiles. The whole passage reads thus: "*And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of faith which he had being yet uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.*"

In the second passage he represents him as being circumcised that he might be the father of CIRCUMCIS-

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ion to all believers, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether literally circumcised or not. The passage reads thus: "*And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.* By the reception of circumcision, therefore, Abraham obtained two prerogatives which forever must distinguish him from every other mortal; THE FATHER OF BELIEVERS IN EVERY AGE, AND THE FATHER OF CIRCUMCISION TO BELIEVERS IN EVERY AGE.—These are distinct prerogatives, the one is not implied in the other, though both were obtained on the same grounds.

Making the distinction which has already been intimated, and which evidently exists, between a form or mode of sealing and the seal itself, and allowing that baptism as an outward token seals the same covenant interests now which circumcision anciently sealed, (which, it is hoped, has already been clearly shown) we labor under no difficulty in seeing the sense in which Abraham is the father of circumcision to believers that are baptized as really as to those who were circumcised. As an inheritance from this patriarch, this heir of the world, they received, on their admission to the church of God and being accounted his seed, the token of the covenant in which they became interested.

Conceding these points, we can as easily see that Abraham is the father of circumcision to baptized believers now, as that he is their father on the ground of their being his spiritual seed. But refusing these concessions, denying that the substance of circumcision as a religious ordinance, viz. as the seal of the covenant, abides, and is applied in the form of baptism, and is inherited in this form by believers from Abraham as it anciently was in the form of circumcision, I say, deny-

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ing all this, there is no possible sense in which we can see that he is now the father of circumcision to baptized believers.

That baptism under the present dispensation is of the same import with circumcision under the former, is no new, or recent doctrine upon earth. The Apostles themselves identified the two ordinances. To each they attached the same spiritual meaning. Under each they represented the sanctification of believers in virtue of their union to Christ. Col. 2. 11, 12.— And by so frequently alluding to both, interchangeably using each in reference to the same leading object, they virtually announced the fact that their import was the same, that the one gave place to the other under the christian dispensation and that all this was well understood by the people to whom they preached and wrote. The early christians appear to have been in the same sentiment. *Justin Martyr*, a writer about forty years after the age of the Apostles says: "*We have not received the carnal but the spiritual circumcision by baptism. And it is enjoined on all persons to recieve it in the same way.*" As succeeding in the place of circumcision, Epiphanius termed baptism the "*great circumcision.*"

Those who deny the agreement of baptism with circumcision, in the particulars specified and who practise accordingly, have, as it is believed, taken the ordinance off from *its original standing*, and divested it of its *primitive significancy*. To administer it to represent the burial, or death of Christ, or to imitate his supposed example, is to administer it for other ends than those for which it appears to be appointed on the sacred page, and for which it was administered and received, by the immediate descendants of the Apostles.

Circumcision and Baptism being of the same import,

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whatever objections may be made against the one as administered to the infant seed of believers, may, with equal propriety, be made against the other.

IV. That infant baptism is of Apostolic origin appears from the silence of the Jews with respect to the conduct of the Apostles towards their children. Among the Jews, infant circumcision was held in the highest estimation. All their early associations and prejudices were in its favor. They indeed numbered it among their most valuable prerogatives as the covenant people of God. "Uncircumcised" was with them a term of reproach and abhorrence. From the days of Abraham they had uniformly considered their children as comprehended with themselves in the covenant of Jehovah, and equally with themselves entitled to the seal of that covenant. The principle of this union and of this interest was with them a point of exquisite sensibility, and they viewed it as essential to their individual happiness, and to their national glory.

Now let us inquire, what reception the Apostles, acting upon Baptist principles, must have received among this people? Acting upon these principles, they must have called upon them to renounce circumcision "as a mere sign of carnal descent, a mark of national distinction and a token of interest in mere temporal blessings." Their infant seed they must have cast out of covenant, and wholly disconnected them from their parents in respect to every species of church relation. As an equivalent for this abridgement of their rights, they could have afforded them nothing.

Treated in this manner by Apostles, would not the Jews have complained; complained that their infants were shut out of the kingdom of Heaven, denied the token of the covenant of God, and placed to as great a distance from HIM as were the little ones of Publicans and Heathen!!

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At innumerable occurrences altogether less offensive and painful than this must have been, all their prejudices and fears were excited. Of the Apostles for preaching against the rites and ceremonies of the Mosaic law, they frequently and bitterly complained.

The unbelieving part of them could never brook for a moment the thought that the ceremonial law was to be superseded by the christian dispensation. For maintaining this offensive doctrine, they devoted Stephen to death. A supposed contrariety in the Gospel to this law was one of their alleged reasons for rejecting it. Indeed they lay constantly in wait for matter of accusation against the Apostles and their followers.

Now I ask, what could have irritated them more, or prompted them to louder complaints, or more bitter charges, than an attempt on the part of the Apostles to overthrow this grand principle of the Abrahamic covenant, a principle unspeakably more dear to them than any thing which that law contained!

Yet, if the Apostles acted upon Baptist principles, they laid their hands on this very PRINCIPLE, and overturned it. In the face of the Jews, in the face of all Heaven and of all earth, they laid their hands on the covenant containing this principle, and, like an old almanac, or an antiquated land deed, laid it aside, informing the whole that the former connection between parent and child in the church of Jehovah was no longer to exist.

And what, I would again ask, could have more distressed the hearts, or disappointed the expectations of the *believing Jews!* Far were they from being either forward or ready to renounce any of the ceremonies of the Mosaic law. Not a title of it did they ever resign till the will of God was so clearly manifested as to banish every ground of doubt. The design of the E-

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pistles to the Corinthians, the Galatians and the Hebrews, appears to have been to remove the objections which they were prone to entertain and to raise against the christian dispensation on the ground that it contravened and abrogated this law.

If they were thus reluctant to part with the ceremonies of this law, how much more reluctant must they have been to part with that GRAND PRINCIPLE which comprehended them and their seed in the covenant of God and entitled each to the *token* of that covenant. When the heavy mandate for them to do this fell from the lips of the Apostles, preceded by no warning, accompanied by no cheering consolation, or promise that any equivalent blessing should replace the privation, how piercing must it have been to their souls!

And at the same time, how entirely must it have disappointed their expectations! Reflecting upon the past economies of religion, they saw every *succeeding* dispensation containing all the blessings of the *preceding*, and *some* peculiar to itself. Reflecting upon the past ways of God towards his people, they saw that the light and privileges with which He had been blessing them, had been *progressive*, always increasing, never diminishing. From these facts, as also from numerous and explicit declarations of the prophets, they had every reason to expect not only a continuation, but a vast enlargement of their privileges under that new and last dispensation to be established by Christ himself! How great must have been their disappointment, on seeing the analogy of all past dispensations completely contradicted, and the predictions of prophets opposed, in the *ejection* of their infant seed from the church and the covenant of God and their deprivation of all right to the token of that covenant!

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Now let the inquiry again be put, would not the Jews, believing and unbelieving, have loudly complained of such conduct in the Apostles towards their children? A person must contradict every principle of reason and of nature, to deny that they would. But *did* they complain of any such conduct in the Apostles? No—not a whisper of complaint, on the part of either Pharisee, scribe, lawyer, or priest, with respect to this subject, is any where expressed or intimated in scripture or in history.

This silence of the Jews is full proof that the Apostles did not act upon Baptist principles. The Jews must have been convinced that baptism had taken the place of circumcision, and they must have seen and known, that, as a substitute for that ancient rite, it was administered to believers and their seed. Beholding this, they saw the favorite principle of the Abrahamic covenant perpetuated and respected.—And beholding this they were still. And on no other ground is it possible to account for their silence.

V. That the Apostles baptized the infant seed of professed believers, appears from the manner in which they spake of their children.

The opposers of infant baptism draw one of their most favorite arguments from certain appellations given to the church in the N. Testament. The holiness there ascribed to this body renders it impossible, as they argue, that the mere children of believers can be so connected with it as to be entitled to the ordinance of baptism. Yet to put those texts of scripture out of the way which appear to favor the idea that the Apostles baptized such children, they seem to have no difficulty in transferring to all the descendants of legally connected parents as strong a term as is any

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where employed in scripture to denote the purity and sanctity of the gospel church.

The Apostle, 1 Cor. 7, 14, asserts that the children of parents one of whom is a believer, *are holy*. According to the construction put upon this passage by the opposers of infant baptism, the holiness here meant is *legitimacy*, i. e. the children born of such parents, are legitimate children. The believing party so sanctifies the unbelieving, that their marriage becomes lawful, and, as a consequence, the children are lawful, legitimate children. All legitimate children are therefore *holy*, in the view of our brethren. But that children may be thus holy, or legitimate, one of the parents must be a believer, for the holiness of the child, according to the Apostle's reasoning, wholly depends upon this single circumstance. The result, therefore, is, the children of parents, both of whom are unbelievers, are illegitimate children, and no marriages are legal but those in which one of the parties at least is a believer.

This interpretation destroying itself, and rendering the Apostles reasoning absolutely ridiculous, the legality of a marriage not in the least depending on the existence of faith in either of the parties, or the legitimacy of children on the faith of *both* or *either* of the parents; let us proceed to inquire for the true meaning of these words.

Saith the Apostle in the two preceding verses:—"*If any brother hath a wife that believeth not, and she be pleased to live with him, let him not put her away. And the woman which hath an husband that believeth not, and if he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him.—For the unbeleiving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbeleiving wife is sanctified by the husband,*

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ELSE WERE YOUR CHILDREN UNCLEAN BUT NOW ARE THEY HOLY."

To understand this passage we need attend but to two points.

1. In what sense these children were holy.

2. The means of their being so.

1. In what sense were these children holy? Not inherently, for personal holiness is not communicated from parent to child. None possess this holiness but such as are "*born* of God," and conformed to him in temper and life. John 1. 13. But they are relatively holy—holy by reason of their relation to and connection with the church of God, and comprehension by its covenant. Those, embraced by this covenant, and thereby severed from all other people, as peculiarly the Lord's, are, in the language of scripture, termed holy. On this account the Israelites of old were termed holy. And on this account are the members of the visible church thus termed at the present time, altho' many of them may be destitute of real holiness of heart.

The former were once thus addressed by the Lord. *Ye shall be holy unto me: for I the Lord am holy, and have severed you from other people that ye should be mine.* Lev. 20. 26. Those not thus *severed* were, by way of distinction, denominated "unclean or common." The term "holy," in contradistinction to the terms "unclean and common," expresses the state of a person or object as *peculiarly the Lord's, as especially separated to his service and worship*, and, as a consequence, is applied in the language of scripture, to every one severed by the covenant of God from others. To be within the comprehension of this covenant and to be *relatively* holy, are, in the language of scripture, one and the same thing. The temple and all its furniture, on account

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of their separation to the worship and service of God, were generally termed *holy*. But to call any person "holy," on any other account than that he either possesses vital religion, or is peculiarly *severed* or separated to God, is utterly hostile to the whole tenor and analogy of scripture. The original term *Hagios*, here translated *holy*, neither in scripture, nor in any Greek writer, sacred or profane, has ever been found to express the legitimacy of children.

By the holiness of these children, therefore, we can understand nothing else than their state as members of, connected with, or related to, the church of God, comprehended by its covenant and consequently sealed by its seal. On this account and on no other, agreeably to the tenor of scripture, can such children be termed holy, while destitute of inherent holiness. In this sense, and in no other, were the children of the ancient covenant people of God holy, while the children of their Heathen neighbors were accounted "unclean or common." *If the root be holy so are the branches.* If the root be common or unclean, so are the branches.—If a parent be relatively holy, so are the children, if unclean or common so are the children.

2. Let us inquire how these children became thus holy. To this inquiry but one answer can be given.—*The believing parent sanctified the unbelieving.* Had this not been the case, these children, according to the reasoning of the Apostle, would have been unclean, the opposite of holy, that is, destitute of any *peculiar* relation to God, or place in his church and covenant.

But here it may be asked, what is implied in the believing parent's so sanctifying the unbelieving that their children were thus holy? Something widely different from legalizing their marriage must be implied in it. Far was it from the Apostle's design to inform

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the Corinthians that all parents, both of whom were unbelievers, were living in mere concubinage!!

The Apostle does not mean that the believing communicates to the unbelieving parent what in scripture is termed sanctification, nor that the unbelieving parent is sanctified by the believing, so as to be holy in such a sense as are the children; because membership in the visible church was never granted on the ground of intermarriage with the people of God. But in such a sense as to effect the transmission of covenant privileges to the children, in such a sense that the children, instead of being denominated "unclean (as would have been the case, were they considered as exclusively belonging to the unbelieving parent) are now considered holy, accounted as belonging to the church rather than to the world.

"Among the early conversions to christianity, it often happened that the Gospel was believed by a woman and rejected by her husband; or believed by a man and rejected by his wife. One of the invariable effects of christianity being a tender concern in parents for the welfare of their offspring; a question was naturally suggested by such a disparity of religious condition, as to the light in which the children were to be viewed. Considering the one parent, they were to be accounted "holy," but considering the other they were to be accounted "unclean." Did the character of the former place them within the church of God? or the character of the latter without it? or did they belong partly to the church or partly to the world, but wholly to neither? The difficulty was a real one, and calculated to excite much distress in the minds of parents who like the primitive christians, did not treat the relation of their little ones to the church of God, as a slight and uninteresting affair."

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"Paul obviates it by telling his Corinthian friends that in this case where the argument *for* the children appears to be perfectly balanced by the argument *against* them, God has graciously inclined the scale in favor of his people: so that for the purpose of conveying to their infants the privilege of being within his covenant and church, the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife and the unbelieving wife by the husband." If it were not so, it must be the reverse; because it is impossible that a child should be born in two contrary moral states: *then*, the believing husband being rendered "unclean" by his wife; and the believing wife "unclean" by her husband, their children would also be "unclean;" i. e. would be born, not in a state of separation *to* God; but in a state of separation *from* him; like those who are without the bond of his covenant, and, not being *appropriated* to him, are "common," or "unclean." But now, saith the Apostle, God has determined that the parental influence shall go the other way. That instead of the interest which a child has in his covenant, by virtue of the faith of one parent, being made void by the infidelity of the other, the very fact of being married to a believer, shall so far *control* the effect of unbelief—shall so far *consecrate* the infidel party, as that the children of such a marriage shall be accounted of the covenant seed; shall be members of the church. *Now*, saith Paul, *they are HOLY.*"*

If the children of parents but one of whom was a believer, stood in such a relation to the church and were so embraced by the covenant of God as to be fitly termed "*holy*," by the Apostles, it is certain that they gave this appellation to children each of whose

*Christian's Magazine, vol. II. p. p. 47–8–9.

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parents was a believer. This appellation was doubtless well understood by the Corinthians, and, in all probability, was the term then in general use to denote the state of the children of professed believers. Herein such children in common with their parents, were declared Saints, of the kingdom of God, within his covenant, entitled to its privileges as their birthright, as indeed his children. No stronger, no more distinguishing appellation is given on the sacred page to any of the visible family of God than this.

This passage, thus understood, (and in no other sense, it is conceived, can it be scripturally understood) contains indubitable evidence that the Apostles baptized, applied the token of the covenant to the infant seed of believing, professing parents.

On this important passage the judicious Dr. Scott makes the following remark. "I cannot but conclude after long attention to the subject, that the baptism of the infant offspring of christians is here referred to, as at that time customary in the churches, and that the Corinthians knew that this was not objected to when only one parent was a christian."

VI. That the usage of Infant Baptism commenced with the Apostles, appears from the history of the church during the first centuries after their days.

The Apostolic age continued nearly to the close of the first century. It was about A. D. 95, that John was banished to the Isle of Patmos; after which period he must have lived at least a few years. During this age numerous churches were established in the earth. As the Apostles travelled and preached, so they established churches in the most important parts of the then known world. Before their death the seven churches in Asia and the churches at Rome and Corinth, Galatia, Colosse and Thessalonica, had be-

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come very respectable for number, information and christian zeal. These churches the Apostles labored to establish in the truth, and to shield against the sophistry, intrigue and opposition of an unbelieving world. As the two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's supper, were calculated to distinguish them from the world and to expose them to its ridicule and contempt, the Apostles were doubtless careful and particular in furnishing them with correct views on each of these ordinances. Very plainly did the Apostle Paul reprove the Corinthians for some irregularities in their observance of the Supper. Nothing is related in either of the Apostolical Epistles that intimates the least irregularity, division, or dispute in any of the churches with respect to Baptism. Doubtless they were, in relation to this ordinance, as the Apostles taught them and would have them.

If, therefore, the Apostles were themselves Baptists, as our brethren suppose and as it is essential to their scheme to have true, then these churches, *even to the close of the first century* were *purely Baptist churches.*— Possessing a high veneration for the Apostles, and knowing to whom they administered the ordinance of Baptism, these churches, all of them without exception, must have been strongly inclined to follow, in this particular, their example. They must have viewed the baptizing of Infants in the same unfavorable light in which our brethren view it:—Nay, in a light far more unfavorable. For having never, in any measure, been familiarized to the practice, and having the pure and luminous example of the Apostles fresh in their memory, the thought of baptizing another class of subjects than they baptized, must have filled them with a

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species of horror. In such a state of things, as cannot but be evident to every reflecting mind, it must have been a most difficult task for an individual preacher or church to have added the children of believers to the subjects of baptism. The attempt must have excited controversy and vehement opposition. As other errors, it must have spread by the instrumentality of *preaching, disputing and extensive debate.* And as baptism is a mere positive institution, having nothing in the nature of things to support it, it must have been vastly more difficult to have given currency to an error respecting it than almost anything else appertaining to the subject of religion. To determine whether infants were, or were not to be baptized, they had only to recur to the example of the Apostles, about which there could then have been no doubt or hesitation. If this example said that infants should not be baptized, as Baptists declare, of little avail must it have been for an individual, or for individuals to have said that they should.

In further attending to this argument, we will attempt to answer four inquiries.

1. How soon after the days of the Apostles was the practice of infant baptism *certainly* general?

2. Previously to this period, have we any account of *controversies* and *disputes* respecting it?

3. Antecedently to this period, have we any account of a *single* attempt being made to introduce this practice?

4. Is there not satisfactory evidence that this practice was common and uninterrupted in the christian church from the *days* of the Apostles down *to* this *period?*

1. Let us inquire, how soon after the days of the Apostles the practice of Infant baptism was *certainly gen-*

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eral. The most intelligent and learned Baptist writers allow that this practice had become general towards the close of the third century, i. e. within 150 or 200 years after the close of the Apostolic age.—Dr. Gill, who read and wrote more to defend the cause of Ante-Pœdobaptism than almost any other one, allows that this practice was general from this period to the eleventh century. The answer to our first inquiry, therefore, shall be this concession of our brethren. The more remote from the days of the Apostles the period of the *certain general* prevalence of Infant baptism can be shown to be, the greater becomes the probability that it was not an Apostolic practice. This Baptist writers well know, and, as a consequence, must be disposed to put the period after which we are now inquiring, at as great a distance from the Apostolic age as possible. When they concede that this practice was general at the time they state, it is because they can do no better.

Within, therefore, 150 or 200 years after the death of the Apostles, the churches which they planted, and which at their death, according to the sentiments of our brethren, were purely Baptist churches, together with all the churches which in this period grew out of them, embraced the "unscriptural," the "unapostolical," the "monstrously absurd" practice of Infant Baptism.

2. Previously to the close of the third century, have we any accounts of controversies and disputes respecting Infant baptism? That no such accounts are furnished by the history of the Apostolic age, must be evident to every one acquainted with the scriptures.

If this practice be unapostolical, it must have been introduced at some period subsequent to the days of the Apostles; and, if introduced then, it must have occasioned, as has already been intimated, controversy.

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and dispute. The change under which the churches passed during the period of 150 or 200 years, according to the sentiments of Baptists, was an exceedingly great change. They in this period became universally corrupt with respect to the important Institution of Baptism. Now we ask; does history furnish us with any accounts of controversies and disputes excited by the introduction or the rapid prevalence of this innovation? To this interesting inquiry, a negative answer must certainly be given. Baptists indeed assert that Infant baptism has been opposed from the time of its introduction to the present moment, but they do no more than assert. So far as their assertion respects the *first* centuries of the christian era, it is *wholly* unaccompanied by proof. Full and particular accounts are given in Ecclesiastical History of controversies and disputes upon other subjects, such as the law of Moses, the re-baptizing of Heretics, Universal Salvation, the doctrine of the Trinity &c. &c. but *none respecting* Infant baptism, a subject far more highly calculated than either of those now mentioned *to convulse the church, disturb its peace and destroy its unity.*

The re-baptizing of Heretics was certainly a far more trifling error than Infant baptism, provided the latter were an innovation; yet this more trifling error "occasioned the calling of an Ecclesiastical council and it finally produced a separation in the christian church which continued two hundred years."

Errors, especially those of a practical nature, usually excite more controversy when first introduced than they maintain after they have become generally established. The controversy which there has been respectiug the subjects of baptism for some centuries past is known to almost every one. This controversy, as it is well known, has been excited not by an intro-

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duction of Infant baptism, but by a denial of its validity. Now if the *denial* of this baptism has excited a controversy that has reached the ears of *all*, how surprising it is that the *introduction* of it excited no controversy which, as we have ever been able to learn, reached the ears of any one!!

3. Antecedently to the close of the third century, have we any account of a *single attempt* being made to introduce this practice, after the days of the Apostles? To this inquiry a negative answer must also be given. The times when, the places where, the persons by whom, and the means by which, many errors in doctrine and practice were introduced and propagated during the first centuries of the christian church, are particularly recorded on the historic page. There we have accounts of those sects and heresies that corrupted, contemned, rejected in whole or in part the ordinance of baptism, as the Ascodrutæ, a species of Gnostics; the Marcosian Heretics; the Valentinians; the sect of Scismatics called the Archontici; the Seluccians and Hermians, in the second century, and the Manichees in the fourth century. But neither of these sects stand charged with the crime of introducing, or attempting to introduce the practice now under consideration. Their crime generally was the *rejection of baptism wholly*, on grounds similar to those on which it is rejected by the modern sect called Quakers.

While we have accounts of these several sects in the writings of historians who lived *in* or soon *after* their time, we are wholly destitute, in the same writings and indeed in all others of those times, of any accounts of the introduction of Infant baptism, of any attempt to introduce it, or of any controversy, dispute or debate about it. The perfect silence of Ecclesiastical history on these important particulars, cannot be viewed by a

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candid, unprejudiced mind, in any other light than as at least a moral certainty that this practice was not introduced after the days of the Apostles.

This brings us to our Fourth and last inquiry; Is there not satisfactory evidence that this practice was common and uninterrupted in the christian church, from the days of the Apostles down to the close of the third century. To this inquiry an *affirmative* answer must be given. The celebrated Calvin, whom our brethren continually bring forward as a witness to support their sentiments respecting the mode of baptism, although he ably defended, and generally, if not exclusively, practised *sprinkling* himself, makes the following remark (Instit. lib. 4. cap. 16, sect. 8.) in relation to the testimony, a sample of which will soon be produced. *They who scatter it abroad among the simple vulgar, that infant baptism was for many years unknown in the church,* LIE MOST FOULLY, (foedissime mentiuntur) *since the most ancient writers refer its original to the times of the Apostles.*" This is indeed a *round* expression, and so round an one as so good and learned a man as Calvin would never have made on slight grounds, acquainted, fully acquainted as he certainly must have been with the history of the church and all the writings of the primitive christians and fathers. Let us attend to a sample of that testimony to which this great and good man in this declaration referred.

Says Justin Martyr, who wrote about 40 years after the Apostles, (whose testimony has already been adduced, p. 118.) *We have not received the carnal but spiritual circumcision by baptism. And it is enjoined on all persons to receive it in the same way.*" This writer, as is evident, terms baptism (doubtless according to the common phraseology of the times in which he lived), baptism. That token of the covenant which anciently

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had been conveyed in the form of circumcision, he had received in the form of baptism. And it was enjoined on all others to receive it in the same form. (see p. p. 112–8.) Now we ask; Is this the language of a Baptist? Is there now a Baptist on the face of the earth? Has there been one for three hundred years past, who would speak of his baptism in this manner? Would he not as soon term it the feast of tabernacles, the feast of unleavened bread, or any other Mosaic rite, as circumcision? Are not Baptists now, and have they not uniformly been very careful and particular to condemn the sentiment that baptism has taken the place of circumcision, and to deny all analogy between the two institutions? And do they not frequently, especially when females are baptized, exert all their ingenuity, to throw this sentiment into a state of abhorrence and contempt? But, entirely unlike them, the first writer after the days of the Apostles who speaks of Baptism, calls it *spiritual circumcision.* And more than this, in one of his apologies for the christians, he observes—"*several persons among us* 60 *or* 70 *years old,* (consequently born in the Apostolic age, about twenty years after the Gospel of St. Matthew was written) *who were made disciples to Christ from their childhood, do continue uncorrupt.*" As these persons were made disciples in infancy, they were doubtless then baptized, agreeably to the commission of Christ:—*Go and teach,* i. e. disciple, *all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.*

All, acquainted with the writings of the ancient christians, are sensible that they termed baptism regeneration. *Gregory Nazianzen* asserts that there is no regeneration to be had after baptism, though it be sought with ever so much crying or tears, and yet grants that there is repentance after the reception of

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this ordinance. *St. Hierom*, another father, speaks of Christ as born of a Virgin, and as regenerated by John. These and similar facts, Dr. Wall cites to prove that the Fathers used the Latin word "Renascor," and the Greek word "Anagennao," to import no more than baptism.

Keeping these facts in view, we will pass to the testimony of Irenæus, a Bishop of Lyons in France, born before the death of St. John, brought up in Asia where this Apostle had lived and died, and one acquainted with Polycarp, the disciple of this Apostle and appointed him the Bishop of Smyrna. Says this person, writing about 67 years after the Apostles, "*Christ came to save all persons who by him are regenerated unto God*, INFANTS, *little ones, youths and elderly persons.*"—

That by "regenerated" he here means baptized is evident from his own words. "*When Christ*, says he, *gave his Apostles the command of regenerating unto God, he said, go and teach all nations*, BAPTIZING *them.* Some Baptist writers pretend that by the term "Infants" as used in the N. Testament and the ancient writings, we should understand "minors," but the word as used in this quotation is happily secured from such a perversion by being coupled with the terms "little ones and youths."

Tertullian who wrote about 100 years after the Apostles, in advising to delay the baptism of infants as also the baptism of all unmarried persons, till they were either married or confirmed in continency, does clearly inform us that the practice had then been adopted; for were it then unknown his advice would have been wholly out of place. The Baptists attempt to construe this advice of Tertullian into an opposition to Infant baptism, but they certainly attempt an impossibility. His advice no more opposes Infant

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baptism than it opposes the baptism of all unmarried people.

Origen, who was born about 85 years after the Apostles, whose forefathers, according to Eusebius, had been christians, the most learned man of the age, and one extensively acquainted with the churches of his time, expressly declared that Infant baptism was of Apostolic origin. "*Let it be considered* saith he, *what is the reason that whereas the baptism of the church is given for forgiveness, infants also by the usage of the church are baptized, when if there were nothing in infants which wanted forgiveness and mercy, the grace of baptism would be needless to them.*" Again he expressly says—"*That the church had received a tradition, or command from the Apostles to give baptism to Infants.*" The testimony of this writer, only a small part of which is here quoted, is direct and full. As his ancestry had been christians as his grandfather must have lived in the very days of the Apostles, he must have known what the practice of the church had been back to *their* days, and during *their* time.

We will now pass to the testimony of Cyprian, a blessed Saint and Martyr, who about 148 years after the Apostles, was constituted Bishop of Carthage, and, next to Origen, the most noted christian writer of that age. In an Ecclesiastical Council, consisting of 66 Bishops, convened at Carthage, A. D. 253, to settle, among other things, a question which had been stated by one Fidus, respecting the lawfulness of baptizing Infants *before* they were eight days old, Cyprian made the following resolution. "*That an infant might be baptized on the second or third day, or at any time after its birth, and that circumcision, besides being a sacramental rite, had something in it of a typical nature, and parties*

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larly in the circumstance of being administered on the 8th day, which ceased at the coming of Christ, who has given us baptism, the spiritual circumcision, in which ordinance we are not thus restricted, with respect to the age or time of administration." In this resolution the council unanimously concurred.

I will here present a reflection of the excellent Mr. Milner, (Ch. His. vol. 1 p. p. 401–2.) "Here, says he, is an assembly of sixty-six pastors, men of approved fidelity and gravity, who have stood the fiery trial of some of the severest persecutions ever known, and who have testified their love to the Lord Jesus Christ in a more striking manner than any Anti-Pœdo-Baptists have had an opportunity of doing in our days, and if we may judge of their religious views by those of Cyprian, and they are all in perfect harmony with him, they are not wanting in any fundamental of Godliness. No man in any age more reverenced the scriptures, and made more copious use of them on all occasions than he did; and, it must be confessed, in the very best manner. For he uses them continually for practice, not for ostentation; for use, not for the sake of victory in argument. Before this holy assembly a question is brought, not whether infants should be baptized at all, none contradicted this, but whether it is right to baptize them immediately or on the eighth day. To a man they all determined to baptize them immediately. This transaction passed in the year 253. Let the reader consider; if Infant baptism had been an innovation, it must have now been of considerable standing. The disputes concerning Easter and other very uninteresting points shew, that such an innovation must have formed a remarkable era in the church. The number of divisions and heresies had been very great. Among them all such a deviation from Apos-

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tolical practice as this, must have been remarked. To me it appears impossible to account for this state of things, but on the footing that it had ever been allowed and therefore that the custom was of the first ages. I am under the necessity of concludiug that the enemies of Infant baptism are mistaken."

This is not the whole, but only a part, yet a fair specimen of the testimony contained in the writings of the two first centuries after the Apostles, that infant baptism was then generally and uninterruptedly practised. As there was no controversy, during this period, concerning this practice, no one wrote either expressly for or against it. What is said in its favor is wholly advanced in connection with remarks on other subjects. When this circumstance is recollected, it will not appear surprising to any one that no more was said and written on the subject.

We have now seen that, from the time of the Apostles down to the period in which even Baptists acknowledge that Infant baptism was general, there are no accounts of any controversies respectingit, or of any attempts to introduce it, but on the contrary we have seen satisfactory evidence that, during this period, the practice was general and uninterrupted. The christians of the three first centuries, therefore, were not, according to the frequent and amazingly confident assertions of our brethren, Baptists. And how could they be ? The writer of the history of the Baptists who appears himself to be a Baptist and one experimentally acquainted with the Baptist constitution and character, has informed us that his *brethren are a peculiar people, that they cannot live in tyrannical states, that free countries are the only places to seek for them, that their whole public religion is impracticable without freedom.** This

* His. Bap. vol. 1 p. 96.

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statement is doubtless correct, and hence it is the height of absurdity especially in a Baptist to pretend that one of his brethren had an existence on earth in any of the first centuries of christianity; for the governments, the states then in existence were tyrannical, absolutely tyrannical.

As there is no dispute with respect to the general prevalence of Infant baptism from the close of the third century till within a few hundred years past, it is deemed unnecessary to exhibit in this place any of the evidence that abundantly exists proving this point.

From what some Baptists have written, and from what some of them pretty frequently and pretty confidently assert, it would seem that Infant baptism is a mere remnant of Popery, one of the corruptions of the Romish Church from which the first reformers did not even reform themselves, and accordingly they often speak of themselves as the only class of professing christians that have entirely separated from that Antichristian body. The unavoidable conclusion from these representations is that all churches practising Infant baptism, are at best but limbs of the body of Anti-Christ himself.

That the Romish church practised infant baptism will be readily confessed. They also observed the sacrament of the supper, professsed to believe in the doctrine of the Trinity and to observe the holy Sabbath. If doing any thing that they did, connects us with them, then we are connected with them in more points than one. That Infant baptism had its origin in the Romish Church any more than the observance of the supper, the Lord's day and the belief of the Trinity, is denied Says Dr. Wall, whose veracity in matters of ancient history has been well tested, "All christians in the world who never owned the Pope's au-

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thority, do now and ever did baptize their Infants." This writer, who enjoyed the best advantages for being acquainted with the history of Infant baptism and who made this the principal subject of inquiry for some years, briefly sums up the evidence on both sides in the following words. "Lastly, for the first four hundred years (i. e. after Christ) there appears only one man, *Tertullian*, who advised the *delay* of Infant baptism in some cases, and one *Gregory* who did perhaps practise such delay in the case of his own children; but no society of men so thinking, or so practising, or any one man saying it was unlawful to baptize Infants. So in the next seven hundred years, there is not so much as one man to be found who either spoke for or practised any such delay, but all the contrary. And when about the year one thousand one hundred and thirty, one sect among the Waldenses* or Albigenses declared against the baptizing of Infants, *as being incapable of salvation*, the main body of that people rejected their opinion, and they of them who held that opinion, quickly dwindled away and disappeared, THERE BEING NO MORE PERSONS HEARD OF, HOLDING THAT TENET, UNTIL THE RISING OF THE GERMAN ANTI-PŒDO-BAPTISTS IN THE YEAR 1522.

If this statement be correct (and no other supported by authentic evidence has been given or can be given) the origin of that sect of professing christians disallowing the practice of infant baptism, no matter by what names they have been called, whether Baptists, Anabaptists, or Antipœdobaptists, cannot be traced further back than the twelfth century, if it can in reality any further than the sixteenth. The practice of infant baptism can be traced back to the days of the Apostles, while the practice of disallowing it can be traced back no more than six centuries, if indeed it can

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more than three. Our brethren draw one of their most favorite arguments in support of their mode of baptism, from the practice of the Greek church, but this church in all the periods of it have practised this rite, as has been clearly shewn by Dr. Wall and others.

Connecting these facts with the three instances of Apostolic conduct already noticed—with the views of the church expressed in the scriptures—with the sameness of the import of baptism with that of circumcision, with the silence of the Jews in reference to the conduct of the Apostles towards their children, and the manner in which the Apostles spake of the children of believers, we are presented with evidence unexceptionable and irresistible of the Divine Authority of Infant Baptism.

It cannot be reasonably objected against this evidence, that the sources of it are remote from the point which it is employed to prove. These sources are *near* this point, as near as the nature of the case admits. It is indeed true that in the baptismal commission given by Christ to the Apostles, infants are not distinctly mentioned. Neither are adults, neither are believers, nor unbelievers. *Go ye*, said Christ, *and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.** A nation comprises not only adults but also infants. In literally baptizing *all nations*, the Apostles would have as really baptized the

* The words of Christ, Mark 16. 16,—*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned* constitute no part of the Apostles' commission. Christ here declares who shall, and who shall not be saved. If, because believing is here mentioned before baptizing, faith must in all cases precede baptism, it will follow from John 3, 5, (if the same kind of reasoning be pursued) that persons in all cases must be *born of water*, i. e. *baptized*, before they are *born of the spirit*, i. e. re-

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infants as the adults which composed those nations.—Not only adults, but also infants, not only parents, but also children, were *baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.* 1 Cor. 10. 2. Ex. 14. 21. 22. Heb. 11. 29. When this memorable transaction was about to take place, a transaction which we are particularly commanded to retain in remembrance, 1 Cor. 10. 1. parents were not separated from their infant seed, but they were baptized together.

The original word, translated "teach" in the commission given to the Apostles, means, as intelligent Baptists admit, "*to disciple.*"* The teaching or discipling of all nations here commanded was something of which all nations, infants as well as adults, were capable. No impossibility was here enjoined.

An individual is *discipled* when brought within the covenant and church of God. When a parent is bro't within this church or covenant, his infant seed, as has already been shewn, are brought in also.

The Apostles, in acting agreeably to their commission, to disciple and baptize *all* nations, only pursued a course calculated to fulfil the promise made to Abraham, Gen. 17. 4. that he should *be the father of many nations.* (See pp. 108–9.

The Apostles, indeed, did not disciple and baptize all nations, but so far as they proceeded, so far they

* This word is not the word translated teaching in the following verse, nor is it either of the words elsewhere translated, to preach, to convert, teach, or instruct.

generated—because being born of water is, in this passage, mentioned before being born of the Spirit. Abraham was commanded *to walk before God and be perfect*, before he was commanded to circumcise himself and household, Gen. 17. 1, 11. Yet this priority was no preventative of the circumcision of infants at eight days old. See pp. 62—3—4.

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discipled parents and their infant seed together. (see p. p. 78—88.)

Christ promised, Mat. 16. 18, *that the gates of hell should never prevail against his church:* Yet, according to the sentiments of Baptists, within two or three centuries after his ascension, the very churches planted by his Apostles, as also those which were afterwards erected, LITERALLY AND UNIVERSALLY UNCHURCHED THEMSELVES, became universally so corrupt with respect to the ordinance of baptism, that as administered by them it was of no validity at all, and, as a consequence, no regular baptisms could ever again be administered!! How inconsistent with this promise and how derogatory to the honor of Christ to suppose that he so far neglected his church as to suffer it to fall into a condition so deplorable—as to suffer it to substitute, and, century after century, to practise a mere human device, in the place of an ordinance of his own appointment! And how far more derogatory to his honor still to suppose, that, during the period of eight or ten hundred years, he never raised up one christian society, or individual, to bear testimony against a corruption so great, so prevalent and so alarming!! And how inconsistent is such a supposition, with the promise of Christ, Mat. 28. 20, to be with his ministers to the end of the world!! Alas, if the declarations of Baptists be true, the promise of Christ both to his church and ministry has failed.

In every period designated by the wisdom of God for the reformation of his church in opinion and practice, characters distinguished for piety and knowledge have uniformly been raised up and employed as instruments in producing the desirable change.

Of this fact every one must be convinced by reflecting a moment on the days of Elijah, of Josiah, Ezra,

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and Nehemiah, of John, of Christ and his Apostles, of Luther, Calvin and the reformers generally. Distinguished piety and knowledge have been the honored instruments of correcting the errors and sins of the church. With these ideas in our minds, without intending any reflection on our brethren, let us turn our attention for a moment to the character of those who *first* attempted to correct the supposed error of Infant Baptism? Were they in any sense or in any degree such characters as have uniformly been raised up to correct other errors? No. They were persons so extravagant in their opinions and practice that every succeeding generation have united in condemning and abhorring them. They were indeed the same species of characters as have uniformly been employed by the prince of darkness, in opposing the truth, and in disturbing the peace and tranquility of the church. Indeed to suppose that Christ raised up and employed such characters as Peter Bruis and Henry, and the German Ana-Baptists, to reform and restore his long lost ordinance of baptism, is to suppose what is diametrically opposite to his conduct in every other case of intended reformation whatever!! Certainly if Infant baptism be an error, it was honored, in the case of these persons, with the same species of opposition that has been made against the most *glorious truths of the word of God.*

Thus far this important subject has been treated almost entirely in a controversial manner. I have endeavored to state the grand principles of Pœdo-baptism in a clear light, and to meet the various objections with candor.

A few brief remarks of a practical nature will close this discourse.

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Let believing parents be thankful for the condescending goodness of the Great Head of the church to your children. He gathers the Lambs in his arms and carries them in his bosom. Isa. 40, 11: Luke 18. 15, 16. He promises not only to be your God, but also to be the God of *your seed.* He places his hand upon them and claims them as His own. You has He placed in the condition of nursing fathers and mothers to His church. The end of the marriage relation in respect to you is to raise up to him a *godly seed.* Mal. 2. 15.

Sacrifice not the children which He calls His own unto his enimies, Ezek. 16. 20, 21 but in the faith of the promises which He has graciously made to them, devote them to Him in that ordinance which is a token of those promises. Afford them that instruction, and set before them that example which He requires. Deut. 6. 6–9. Eph. 6. 4. Let your household be so regulated that, like the household of Philemon, it shall constitute in itself a church. Phil. 2. Restrain them from every forbidden course. 1 Sam. 3. 13, 14. Let the promises which respect your children animate your prayers and exertions in their behalf. Let all the children of the church be considered and treated as under the watch and care of the church, and let the members assist one another in educating them for God. Their relation to the church gives the church not only power to counsel, but also power to discipline them. As early as possible let them be informed of their standing. Let them know that they are CONSECRATED VESSELS, under the bond of the covenant, and peculiarly obligated to obey all the precepts of the Lord, to confess Christ before men, to discern his body, and to come in a believing, holy manner, to all the ordinances of His house. And in case any of them become perverse, obstinately neglecting their duty, let them be

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dealt with accordingly, and separated from the church.

You who are children of the covenant and who have been recognized as such in the holy ordinance of baptism, be thankful for the standing and privileges which the Great Head of the church has given you. Hereby be excited to seek his face and favor. Isa 45. 19—to serve him faithfully, and to walk in all his statutes and ordinances blameless. Part not, like profane Esau, with your birthright. Heb. 12. 16. Remember that the NAME OF THE TRIUNE GOD has been called, and the TOKEN OF HIS COVENANT put, upon you. Avouch him to be your God. Break not his Holy Covenant. See that your hearts are right with Christ; that He is formed in you the hope of Glory; that you love his Gospel, his cause, his people, his kingdom. Walk with his friends, devoutly attend upon his ordinances, confess him, honor him, and serve him in the world.—You indeed belong to His *visible kingdom*, and so have thousands and thousands who, notwithstanding sunk, at death down to hell! Take heed then to yourselves, and every moment keep steadily in view THAT HOUR, *when the Son of man shall send forth his Angels, and they shall gather out of* HIS KINGDOM *all things that offend and* THEM WHICH DO INIQUITY, *and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.* Mat. 13. 41, 42. Ch. 8. 11, 12.

MY BRETHREN, MEMBERS OF PŒDO-BAPTIST CHURCHES; *let me urge you to understand and defend your own sentiments and to practise agreeably to them.* These sentiments are found in the Bible. They run through the Bible. They are articles of faith and practice too precious to be parted with. *Be ye mindful always of the covenant, the word commanded to a thousand generations.* While you respect the rights of private judgment in the Baptist denomination, enjoy these rights your-

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selves. While you are thankful to God for whatever is correct in their sentiments and practice, scrupulously avoid what you believe to be incorrect. Be not like them in any thing for which you condemn them.—As they separate you from their communion, disowning you as properly churches of Christ, claiming themselves to be exclusively His fold, take in respect to them the humble place they assign you, remembering with gratitude and joy that *Christ* communes with you and builds you up, and that you belong to a communion which, long before His advent in the flesh, he promised *to extend over the whole earth, and to preserve to the end of time.*

Follow peace with your brethren, and if with an intemperate zeal, a disorganizing spirit, transgressing those rules by which different religious denominations should sacredly be governed in their conduct towards each other, they come within your limits, and set up the CRY of their particular sentiments in the centre of your societies, follow peace with *them still*, hoping and praying that a better judgment and a better spirit may soon actuate them, a judgment and a spirit in the exercise of which their conduct will harmonize with the peace of Jerusalem, and with the prayer of Christ, THAT ALL HIS FOLLOWERS MIGHT BE ONE, THAT THE WORLD MIGHT BELIEVE THAT THE FATHER HAD SENT HIM. *AMEN.*

ERRATA.

Page 37, line 28, for *came*, read *come*—page 128, line 34, for *is*, read *in*—page 134, line 35, for *baptism*, read *spiritual circumcision*—page 138, line 8, for *vol. I. p. p.* 401–2, read *vol. III. p. p.* 426–7.

Other errors less material will be noticed, which the reader is desired to correct.

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